

The Modern Language Journal

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The Modern Language Journal

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COURSES FOR BEGINNERS IN SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES¹

By E. C. HILLS

THE best method of teaching a modern foreign language to beginners is a subject that lends itself to controversy and it is one that I approach with considerable diffidence. There are probably no two people who agree as to how beginners should be taught, and my preference must be considered merely that of one among a host of teachers. I shall, however, treat this subject as impersonally as is possible.

With our present educational system, beginners should be classified, it seems to me, in three separate groups: firstly, those who begin the study of a foreign language in the primary school; secondly, those who begin in the secondary school; and thirdly, those who begin in college. In the primary schools there should be a minimum of formal grammar, and a maximum of oral work such as conversation and story telling. Easy stories should be read and discussed, and the students should tell the stories over and over again, both orally and in writing, until they almost know them by heart. There should be very little translation from one language into the other. At first it may be necessary to give the English equivalents of words or sentences, but formal translation of texts should be avoided. The work is made more interesting and surely more effective by the introduction of action series and of games and songs. Fortunate are the young people who have a few years of such training with teachers who speak the language well; but today, for the most part, this early training is to be had chiefly in private schools.

When we consider the secondary schools we find the problem quite different. The students are more mature, and their work is

¹A paper read at the meeting of the Association of Modern Language Teachers of The Central West and South at Chicago, May 7, 1921.

presumably more arduous. The average age of the high school matriculant is about fourteen years. Most high school students study a modern foreign language only two years, although a considerable minority take such work for three or four years. Those students who begin the study of a modern foreign language during their first year in the high school are younger and to a large degree less mature than are those who make their start during the third year, and again the problem of the two classes of students is somewhat different.

It is my conviction that the younger and the less mature the student is, the more time should be given to oral drill and the less time to translation and the study of formal grammar. But when a boy or girl has reached the age of fifteen or sixteen years and has already spent nine or ten years in school, it is certainly a mistake to expect him or her to learn a new language by the same mental processes that a child in the primary school must use of necessity.

A child ten years of age can best learn the uses of the tenses of verbs merely by using them again and again in sentences, until the more common constructions become a part of his mental equipment almost without conscious effort. But the older student has a natural tendency to classify facts and reduce them to rules. This tendency should be encouraged. A worthwhile student fifteen or sixteen years of age has developed intellectual curiosity, and his mind is not satisfied if he can not explain natural phenomena. Encourage him by all means to fix in his memory the conjugations of verbs and the rules for the inflection of nouns and adjectives, and then have him use these facts over and over again until they become second nature. Do not hesitate to help the more mature student to avail himself of every possible short-cut to a knowledge of the foreign language.

In my opinion it is also of vital importance that all high school students should be required to practice translating the foreign language into English as well as English into the foreign language. This exercise often makes our students conscious, for the first time, of the structure of their native language, and this is no mean advantage. It is, in fact, one valid reason for the study of a foreign language in the public schools, which we can present to the general public. Moreover, the ability to make an accurate translation of one language into another is a most useful possession, and one that

can be had only by practice and long continued effort. I have even known young people who possessed two languages about equally well, but who were quite unable to translate accurately a letter from one language into the other. Such persons would not make satisfactory correspondents in a business house that has dealings with foreign countries. Moreover, our students of foreign languages should consider it one of their duties to interpret to our American public the thought of other peoples, and the interpretation should be correct and accurate.

Let me make clear that I do not advocate the study of a modern foreign language merely by the old-fashioned "grammar and translation" method, now so much in discredit, but I do urge that all high school students have a reasonable amount of study of formal grammar and of practice in translation. Let us not go to the other extreme and throw overboard all such aids to the thorough acquisition of a foreign language.

The most important factor in the successful teaching of a language is, of course, the competent, well-trained and skilful teacher. These we must have, or else the study of all foreign languages will fall into disrepute. And our teachers must not hesitate to require good hard work and to eliminate those who will not work. Only rarely can wealth be acquired without hard work, much of which is mere drudgery. Knowledge is even a sterner task-master than wealth, for knowledge can never be acquired without hard work. We may seek every possible means to make study pleasant and interesting, but let us never try to make it too easy. Rather let our motto be thoroughness. If one may generalize, it is safe to say that our American people need nothing more than respect for thoroughness. Of course, young people are rarely thorough, and it is exceedingly difficult to make them so; but let us do what we can to make our students acquire the habit of doing their work thoroughly. If we do this, the nation will in time give us our due reward.

Our young people should be taught even to do hard, thorough work when they are not under our vigilant eye. Once I visited a first-year French class in a large city high school. The lesson was in the irregular verbs. The teacher was sweating blood in an effort to hammer the verbs into the students, no one of whom gave evidence of having done any work at all in preparation of the

lesson. I confess that I boiled with indignation. Why should those students not have been required to go off by themselves and learn those verbs? The teacher's function was to explain difficulties and to see that the work was done well, but why should she do all the work? For her to do so was unfair to herself and unfair to the students in the class.

There is no question that language clubs and the occasional performance of a play in the foreign language help to arouse interest and are a practical aid to the acquirement of an active vocabulary. They serve to make a language appear alive and not a mere abstraction.

The benefits derived from the acquisition of a foreign language should be both utilitarian and cultural. It would be a great pity if the high schools should make their language work entirely utilitarian. If the beauty of a language and the sublime thoughts of its prophets were withheld from our students, the result would be comparable to a building constructed so as to keep out the wind and the rain but without the slightest regard to graceful lines and harmonious colors. By all means, let us at least attempt to convince our students that the knowledge of a foreign language is a key that will open the door to a storehouse of golden treasures in verse and prose.

College students are older and more mature than those in the high schools and they should, therefore, begin the study of a new language in quite a different way. It is their privilege and their duty to make use of every mental short-cut and to master the elements of the language as quickly as possible. They should commit to memory lists of new words, the conjugations of verbs, and the commoner rules of accidence and syntax. This memory work should be accompanied by much reading and by varied exercises. It is absurd to ask college students to learn a new language by a "natural method" or by an extreme "direct method." They are too old and they have not the time.

It is a well known fact that some universities—notably Columbia and Chicago—no longer give elementary courses in foreign languages, while some others offer the work, but do not give full credit. President Nicholas Murray Butler has said that in his opinion it is as absurd to give elementary language courses in a university as it would be to give courses in elementary arith-

metic. There is no blinking the fact that beginners' courses in foreign languages have fallen into discredit in college circles. Is this not at least partly due to the method by which languages are taught in many colleges? Students spend hours and hours of their time in the class-room repeating over and over again the most elementary phrases so as to fix them in their memory by a "natural process," and they do very little serious study outside of the class-room. Now, this is not intellectual work of a high order such as college students should be expected to do, and I am convinced that the elementary nature, the almost childish methods, of much of the teaching of foreign languages in our colleges is largely responsible for the opinion—which seems to be growing—that beginners' courses have no place in a university.

For my part, I see no valid reason for not giving beginners' courses to underclassmen in college provided the work be brought up to college standards. There is today a tendency in the West to divide the College of Liberal Arts into two separate parts: the Junior College and the Senior College, or the Lower Division and the Upper Division. Several universities (California, Chicago, Minnesota, Nebraska, Stanford, Toledo, Washington) have already made the separation and others are preparing to do so. These universities are also organizing separate junior colleges in their respective states and are urging high school graduates to take the first two years of college work in a junior college before coming on to the university. There are at the present time about one hundred and twenty-five junior colleges, nearly all of which are in the South and West.

There is a growing feeling that the real line of demarcation between secondary school work and university work comes at the end of the sophomore year in college. If this be true, there is certainly no good reason why freshmen and sophomores should not have the opportunity of acquiring a new language, providing they are willing to do good stiff work. The case of juniors and seniors is different. If an upperclassman finds that he must learn a new language in order to do satisfactorily some work he has at hand, he should have the opportunity of learning it, but he should not receive college credit for this work.

For most students who begin the study of a new foreign language after they enter college, the chief value comes from the ability to

read articles and books on science, medicine, law, history, and so forth, and also to read prose fiction and verse.

In order to make beginners' courses in college really worth while, we must not hesitate to require the study of formal grammar and translation from one language into the other. There should be much written work and much reading of texts. The reading should begin early and the amount read in a given time should increase steadily. In the second semester—and still more so in the second year—this problem invariably presents itself: how can we read daily from ten to twenty-five pages and do the work thoroughly? I see only two solutions, neither one of which is perfect. We can ask the students to prepare a few pages intensively and do the rest rapidly. Or we can assign only a few pages for a lesson and require of the students much outside reading. The two methods are equally effective, if there be frequent written tests. Not all of the pages that are prepared intensively should be translated, but there should be some translation daily during the first two years in college. Most of the text, however, should be treated differently. There should be a discussion of idioms and difficult syntactical expressions, and this discussion should be carried on in the foreign language so far as is possible.

Even among students who wait until they go to college before beginning the study of a foreign language there are some who wish to learn to speak the language well and are willing to make the necessary effort. I might say parenthetically that there are many who would like to speak the language but who are *not* willing to make the necessary effort: this type of undergraduate I do not consider in the following remarks.

Those who wish to learn to speak should be segregated from the others at the earliest possible moment. They should be in small classes and should have the best teachers. They should have additional work in oral and written composition, and they should have training in phonetics. In return for these special privileges they should be expected to do superior work.

It is my sincere belief that all beginners' courses in foreign languages can be made worth while, whether they be given in the elementary school, in the high school, or in the first two years of college, but one and the same method can not be used for the

three groups. The younger the student, the more he can absorb without conscious effort. The older he is, the more he can and must acquire by conscious intellectual effort. By all means, let us not make the mistake of advocating one method for all, both young and old. And in all our courses in foreign languages let us insist on thorough work. After all there is a real pleasure—and a pleasure of high order—that comes from feeling that work is well done.

E. C. HILLS

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COMMON MISTAKES IN OUR FRENCH TEXT-BOOKS
II. FRENCH CLASS-ROOM EXPRESSIONS AND THE
TEACHING OF FRENCH GRAMMAR IN FRENCH

By F. J. KUENY

ONE of the newer text-books speaks of class-room *papiers*, using a word that is perfectly clear to the American students but unknown in French schools and colleges. Another book that went through a second (revised) edition in 1919 and enjoyed a very friendly review in the MODERN LANGUAGE JOURNAL calls the class-room "la chambre de classe" (p. 61). Class-room expressions have led to more errors than the regular direct-method exercises, and the reason for it is quite apparent. The latter concern themselves mostly with turning over the words of a given text; they arbitrarily limit their scope to the artificial handling of a set of words, without regard for any real experience; they translate words in terms of words; they are always guided by the text and with ordinary care should be fairly correct. But the class-room expression has no such guide; it should not translate words, but objects, and notions, and ideas; it represents the really direct method, the natural method. Unfortunately it does translate something into French, and something which, curiously enough, is often not very different from French. The adult mind is not a *tabula rasa*. The student "hands in" so many "papers" a day or a week, and whenever he does that there is no French model before his eyes or in his mind, but long and continued practice has anchored in his mind the group "I hand in my paper." He should say: "Je remets mon devoir"; and *remettre* is so different from "to hand in" that he will soon learn it and use it properly; but "paper" and "papier" coincide in so many cases that he will instinctively make them coincide in this case, too. If this natural tendency has been developed through the use of a much advertised text-book and strengthened by the authority of an instructor who daily says to his pupils: "Passez les papiers à droite," or "Remettez vos papiers," a strong habit has been formed which is apt to give much trouble to the next instructor. The cognate or doublet expressions "lesson-*leçon*" and "object-*objet*" cause similar troubles. Indeed, the frequency of errors of this kind makes it useless to quote many books in the present article. For the mistaken uses

of the one word *leçon* it would be necessary to quote practically every author who has used it in recent years. The pity of the situation is that the people whom we must criticize belong to a class of pioneers and may in a way be numbered among the most progressive in the profession. It is not our purpose to throw cold water upon the enthusiasm of new converts; we would rather help the reader by drawing a line between the adventurous and the progressive. The article will set forth, in English, some important distinctions not ordinarily observed in our text-books, and introduce some longer French developments that may be considered self-explanatory examples. It will deal, first, with class-room expressions proper; and, second, with the teaching of French grammar in French.

Leçon is probably the most widely abused word in the new books. The French use it in a very restricted sense in a few technical class-room expressions, stock phrases, which every teacher should know and make his own. "Une leçon" is an assignment to be learned by heart or otherwise outside of the class-room. The "leçon" can only be "learned," and therefore such expressions as "faire une leçon," "écrire une leçon," which refer to a written assignment, cannot be countenanced. If you give your students a "quiz" (*une colle*), they may of course "écrire leur leçon," but that is the only way a "leçon" may be in writing. The common verbs of which *leçon* is the object are *expliquer*, *donner*, *apprendre*, *réciter*, *savoir*, *repasser*: Il existe toujours des professeurs qui n'expliquent pas leurs leçons. Ils se contentent de dire à la fin de la classe: "Pour demain, vous apprendrez le chapitre suivant et vous écrirez l'exercice de ce chapitre." Le professeur qui connaît les enfants, les petits et les grands, ne donne jamais de leçon sans d'abord l'expliquer. Il connaît, lui, les difficultés que ses élèves ne soupçonnent même pas. Il sait que ses élèves ne peuvent pas apprendre une leçon qu'ils ne comprennent pas. Les élèves apprennent leurs leçons, soit chez eux, soit dans une salle d'étude de l'école. L'élève qui apprend mardi une leçon qui a été fixée pour jeudi risque de l'oublier dans l'intervalle; il la repasse donc encore une fois avant la classe de jeudi matin. De cette façon il est certain de savoir sa leçon quand le moment viendra de la réciter.

The word *récitation* designates the actual reciting of a lesson in the class-room. In the sense of "session," or "period," *récitation* is not proper. The "French period" is best called "classe de français," or "cours de français." "Apprendre une leçon" is perhaps more common than "étudier une leçon." "Préparer une leçon" applies more often to the teacher than the student; it generally means "préparer une classe." For the student to prepare a text for translation involves work that is not exactly of the "leçon" type, and "préparer une traduction" may be more desirable. (The professor who "lectures" *fait une leçon* de littérature, d'histoire, de philosophie, d'économie, etc.; ses élèves apprennent cette leçon.)

For the student the object of *faire*, or *écrire*, is *devoir*. The "devoir" is the written assignment; it is written outside of the class-room and "handed in" at another class meeting. Nos élèves font un devoir tous les jours; ils écrivent leurs devoirs à l'encre, pas au crayon. C'est à la salle d'étude qu'on apprend ses leçons et qu'on fait ses devoirs. Nos grammaires se composent de deux parties, d'une partie théorique qui explique les règles, et d'une partie pratique qui fournit des matériaux pour l'application de ces règles. Chaque chapitre renferme d'ordinaire une partie théorique à apprendre, c'est la leçon, et un exercice à faire par écrit, c'est le devoir. The "paper" (written lesson, "quiz," or dictation) is "une copie." Voici une copie qui n'est pas signée. Et ce devoir-ci, à qui est-il? Voilà un bon devoir. Voilà une copie sans faute. "Devoir de français" is the best title to be given our "French papers," or "French exercises." A "devoir français" is something in the nature of an essay. A series of disconnected sentences cannot be called "composition," that is only an "exercice français." "Composition française" is generally a synonym for "devoir français." Composition work of the sort done by college freshmen (stories, descriptions, "themes"), is better called *rédaction*, whereas *un thème français* is an exercise consisting of connected sentences translated from English into French. If we were more and more to adopt the practice of translating in writing a passage of say 25 to 30 lines from some French author into perfect English, that would be "une version française." From this it would appear that the exercises that figure in every chapter of our grammars would best be entitled on the student's paper "devoir de français." Our usual "composition books" consist of "thèmes

français." "Signez vos noms" is perhaps not the best thing to say; "signez votre nom" might be better, although many will prefer the truly French "signez votre devoir," "n'oubliez pas de signer votre devoir," or "mettez votre nom en tête de votre copie." L'élève apporte son devoir en classe; il le remet au professeur à la date fixée. Le professeur emporte les devoirs chez lui ou bien à son bureau, il les corrige, il souligne les fautes à l'encre rouge, au crayon rouge, au crayon bleu. Le devoir est bien écrit ou mal écrit, bien fait ou mal fait, fait avec soin ou négligé. Il y a des élèves qui font des pattes de mouche, des ratures, des pâtés; il y en a qui griffonnent leurs devoirs à la hâte; il y a même parfois des devoirs qui sont bâclés. Les fautes sont des fautes de ponctuation, des fautes d'orthographe (fautes d'accent, mots mal épelés, mots épelés de travers), des fautes d'accord, des fautes de syntaxe, des fautes de français, des solécismes; nos élèves (et nos livres) font même des barbarismes. On appelle faute de français toute expression qui n'est pas française; un solécisme est une faute contre la grammaire; un barbarisme est un mot qui n'existe pas dans la langue. L'éditeur de *l'Abbé Constantin* (1916) qui demande à la page 217: "Les dames comment sont-elles impressées de ce qu'elles ont vu?" fait un barbarisme en fabriquant le mot "impressé," qui n'existe pas en français. Il devrait dire: "Et quelle impression cela fait-il à ces dames?" ou bien: "Quel effet cela a-t-il sur ces dames?" Un autre livre, une grammaire, emploie dans sa deuxième édition, édition revue et corrigée, le mot "pourvoya" qui ne paraissait pas dans la première édition; il veut dire "pourvut," troisième personne du singulier du passé défini actif du verbe "pouvoir"; "pourvoya" est un barbarisme. Nous avons relevé encore les expressions "pouvoir mais," "avoir de cesse," "phrase adverbiale," "phrase de manière," "sourieux," autant de choses barbares. Les fautes de ce genre sont heureusement rares dans les livres que nous avons examinés. Seulement, il faut bien l'avouer, les fautes d'impression, les expressions impropres, les fautes de français et les solécismes y sont beaucoup trop nombreux. Une édition scolaire de *Tartarin sur les Alpes* a une cinquantaine de fautes d'impression. Un certain livre de lecture très répandu renferme plus de cent expressions impropres et fautes de français. Il a paru depuis cinq ou six ans trois livres de classe dont le titre n'est pas français. "Grammaire de lecture et de conversation"

n'est pas français: il fallait dire: La Grammaire enseignée par la lecture et la conversation. "Nouveau cours français" n'est pas correct, non plus: on dit "cours de français," c'est donc "Nouveau cours de français" que le manuel devrait s'appeler. Enfin, on a publié le "Carnet de campagne d'un officier français par lieutenant René Nicolas"; il faudrait "par le lieutenant René Nicolas." . . . Mais nous voilà loin de nos devoirs. Le professeur les annote parfois, c'est-à-dire qu'il fait une correction, qu'il renvoie à la grammaire ou qu'il indique d'un mot ou d'une lettre que tel ou tel passage est très bon. Enfin, il donne une note. Il est d'usage en France de marquer de zéro à vingt; ici nous marquons de zéro à cent ou de zéro à dix, ou bien nous nous servons des lettres de l'alphabet. Suivant le système, cent, dix ou A marque un devoir parfait ou à peu près parfait, et c'est là une note qui se donne assez rarement. On dit qu'il y a des professeurs "coullants" ou "bon papa" et d'autres qui sont sévères; il en est de pas commodes; il en est même de raides.

Les m a t i è r e s (subjects) sont, elles aussi, plus ou moins faciles, plus ou moins difficiles. Les matières obligatoires ou communes (required) ne sont pas nécessairement les plus difficiles, pas plus que les matières facultatives (optional) ne sont les plus faciles. En parlant des examens, les Français n'emploient pas tout à fait les mêmes expressions que nous. "To prepare an examination," c'est préparer un examen ou se préparer à un examen. "To take an examination," c'est passer un examen; "to come up for an examination," se présenter à un examen; "to pass" s'appelle réussir à son examen; "to fail," échouer à un examen. "A failure" s'appelle un échec. Ceux qui passent leurs examens avec succès sont admis ou reçus à leurs examens; ceux qui échouent à leur examen, c'est-à-dire ceux qui passent un mauvais examen, sont ajournés ou refusés; s'ils redoublent (repeat) leur classe, leurs camarades les appellent "vétérans."

Nous aurons épuisé la liste des anglicismes les plus usuels qui fleurissent la langue de nos écoles, quand nous aurons relevé les fautes auxquelles donnent souvent lieu les titres d'ouvrages. Il ne faut pas dire que *Colomba* est un roman par Mérimée, ni que *l'Abbé Constantin* est par Halévy; il faut dire que *Colomba* est un roman de Mérimée et que *l'Abbé Constantin* est de Halévy. On ne dit pas davantage que *la Poudre aux yeux* est une comédie par

Labiche et Martin; il faut dire que c'est une comédie *de* Labiche et Martin. C'est là une faute qui revient très souvent dans un certain livre de lecture mais qui ne se retrouve heureusement pas dans un nouveau livre de lecture *du* même auteur. Enfin, quand le titre de l'ouvrage est un nom, on parle de cet ouvrage au genre et au nombre de ce nom. *Les Misérables* sont un long roman de Victor Hugo; ils n'ont plus en France la vogue qu'ils avaient il y a cinquante ans, mais ils sont toujours populaires en Amérique. *La Petite Fadette*, de George Sand, est un peu oubliée en France aujourd'hui; on la lit toujours dans les écoles des États-Unis. De même on ne dit pas que Victor Hugo a écrit une grande partie de son *les Misérables* en exil, ni que Gavroche est un personnage, encore moins un caractère, de *les Misérables*; il faut dire: une grande partie de ses *Misérables*, un personnage des *Misérables*. On ne parle pas des "caractères" d'une pièce de théâtre ou d'un roman; c'est "personnages" qu'il faut dire, et l'on examine le caractère de tel ou tel personnage.

Nous avons vu dans notre premier article que pour apprendre, et pour enseigner, il est bon de savoir répéter d'une façon intelligente. Un manuel très récent donne deux fois de suite dans un exercice de quelques lignes l'exemple d'une répétition qui n'est pas intelligente. Il s'agit d'une anecdote qui a trait à la *Zaïre* de Voltaire. Il est dit dans le texte que "*Zaïre*, tragédie de Voltaire, ne fut point goûtée du public à sa première représentation." L'auteur de l'anecdote a bien soin de mettre *goûtée* au féminin singulier, par accord avec le sujet *Zaïre*; mais le manuel ajoute les questions suivantes: "*Zaïre* de Voltaire a-t-il joui d'un immense succès dès la première représentation?—Comment a-t-il été accueilli du public?" L'auteur du manuel ne sait pas répéter, il ne sait pas écouter. Il aurait dû se dire que, de deux choses l'une, ou le féminin *goûtée* du texte est une faute, ou bien ses deux *il* ne sont pas corrects. Les élèves à qui on apprend la conversation dans ce manuel à l'école supérieure nous arriveront bientôt à l'université. Quand ils nous feront cette faute, il faudra les reprendre, et alors,

Ce n'est pas un concert à dilater le coeur.

Il est toujours désagréable d'avoir à contredire un collègue, et cela nous met parfois dans une position assez délicate.

L'enseignement de la grammaire française en français est chose assez récente dans nos manuels. Il se répand rapidement, et, quand il se sera défait des habitudes qui l'entravent encore, il est permis d'en attendre le plus grand bien. Ces habitudes donnent lieu à des malentendus qu'il suffit de signaler pour les dissiper. Dieu nous garde de donner à entendre que la manière française de comprendre la grammaire et l'analyse grammaticale présente des avantages que ne possèdent pas les méthodes américaines! Les méthodes valent exactement ce que valent les résultats qu'elles produisent. Toute méthode est bonne, qui aboutit, et la fin, ici du moins, justifie les moyens. Tout enseignement qui interprète correctement les textes et les fait comprendre aux élèves, a droit au respect. Aussi bien, il ne s'agit pas ici de chicanes de grammairiens, mais de la langue de la grammaire. Nos manuels parlent français; leur raison d'être c'est qu'ils se proposent de nous aider à enseigner le français; on est donc en droit d'en attendre qu'ils parlent français, et en particulier qu'ils donnent aux mots français le sens que leur donne le dictionnaire français. Quand ils parlent de *phrase*, d'*objet*, de *qualifier*, de *modifier*, de *parties principales*, etc., il nous faut l'assurance que ces mots reçoivent bien l'emploi et le sens que leur réserve la langue française.

Un certain livre demande à la page 37 ce "que signifie la phrase *les quarante Immortels*." Un autre (p. 65) ce qu'il y a "à remarquer dans la phrase, *en son nom*." Passons la virgule malencontreuse qui dépare la deuxième citation, pour ne nous occuper que du sens de ces questions. Si je sais l'anglais, je n'ai pas de difficulté à comprendre. Mais si je ne sais que le français, je suis très étonné de l'emploi qu'on fait ici du mot "phrase." Mon dictionnaire définit une phrase: Une suite de mots présentant à l'esprit un sens complet. Ce n'est évidemment pas le cas des expressions "les quarante Immortels" et "en son nom." Mes deux auteurs n'emploient pas le mot "phrase" au même sens que moi; ils lui donnent le sens qu'il a en anglais. Le dictionnaire anglais définit le mot "phrase": "Two or more words forming an expression by themselves, not so complete in thought as a clause, but having in the sentence the force of a single part of speech, as: an adverbial phrase." C'est bien cela; l'anglais appelle "phrase" ce que le français appelle "locution" ou "expression;" le français appelle "phrase" ce que l'anglais appelle "sentence." L'anglais donne à

la partie le nom que le français donne au tout. C'est une distinction qu'ignorent beaucoup de manuels, et il arrive à certains d'entre eux de combiner des expressions que l'élève américain saisit du premier coup, mais que le Français ne comprendra jamais. L'expression "phrase de manière," par exemple, qu'un annotateur de *Colomba* emploie couramment, ne présente aucun sens à l'oreille française. Ajoutons que la phrase se compose de *propositions* et que très peu de livres donnent à ce dernier terme son vrai nom anglais de "clause."

"*Qui* relatif est sujet, *que* relatif est objet." Cette phrase, qui se comprenait très bien en France il y a deux cents ans, ne se comprend plus aujourd'hui qu'en Amérique. Le mot "objet" a fait place en France à "complément" et à "régime." Les grammaires françaises parlent de "régimes directs" et de "régimes indirects," de "compléments directs" et de "compléments indirects," de "pronoms régimes" et de "pronoms compléments." Le participe passé conjugué avec l'auxiliaire "avoir" s'accorde avec son complément direct quand ce complément le précède; il demeure invariable lorsque le complément direct suit ou qu'il n'y en a pas.—Le colonel Nevil, qui "ne comprenait rien à l'affaire," croit qu'Orso est à la chasse, et il s'attend à "le voir revenir la carnassière toute pleine." (*Colomba*, chap. XVIII.) L'éditeur nous demande: "Commentez la construction de "carnassière." Qu'est-ce que cela peut bien être? Nous cherchons aux notes et nous trouvons à la page 231: "*With*, indicating attendant circumstance, for lack of a better term, is not translated." Nous y sommes, ou du moins, nous croyons y être. "Carnassière" est construit sans préposition et l'on nous demande de répéter la remarque que fait la note sur cette construction. Seulement, le commentateur, lui, explique cela en anglais et il déclare lui-même qu'il n'est qu'à moitié satisfait de son explication. Comment allons-nous dire cela en français? Nous nous rappelons qu'il se sert souvent des expressions de "phrase adverbiale" et de "phrase de manière," et nous avons bien peur que nos élèves ne s'en servent et qu'ils ne croient parler français. Il faudrait tout un long article pour expliquer comment les grammaires françaises analysent ordinairement ce qu'on appelle dans ce pays-ci des "adverbial phrases," compléments circonstanciels, d'une part, et locutions adverbiales, de l'autre, et les premiers se subdivisant en compléments circonstanciels de lieu, de temps, d'instrument, de

manière, etc. On trouvera cela dans toutes les grammaires françaises, mais il n'est peut-être pas nécessaire que nous poussions les choses aussi loin avec nos élèves. Ce qui est certain, c'est qu'il ne faut pas les faire parler charabia.

Un certain "French Course" déclare que les livres français, les livres écrits en France, sont insuffisants et que nous avons besoin de créer des mots et des expressions pour enseigner la grammaire française. Il cite les expressions *parties principales* et *synopsis*, qui, dit-il, ne se trouvent pas dans les livres français et qu'il nous faudrait, ou qui du moins seraient très commodes, pour enseigner les verbes. Il est vrai que les écoles de France ne connaissent pas de "parties principales" aux verbes, mais de temps immémorial les petits Français ont appris leurs *temps primitifs*. Ils ne savent pas davantage ce que c'est que la "synopsis" d'un verbe, mais on leur fait faire des *tableaux synoptiques*.

Les mots *gouverner*, *régir*, *prendre* donnent également lieu à de nombreux malentendus. Il sera bon, ici encore, de s'en tenir aux grammaires rédigées en France. On y verra que certains verbes latins, par exemple, gouvernent l'accusatif, ou que les substantifs français prennent une *s* au pluriel, prennent un *x* au pluriel, ne prennent pas la marque de pluriel. Mais un petit Français serait très embarrassé si on lui demandait, avec une de nos grammaires, de donner "quelques verbes qui prennent toujours le génitif." L'auteur qui pose cette question a en vue les verbes comme "jouir, se servir, se souvenir," qui sont suivis de la préposition "de," qui n'admettent pas de régime direct comme les verbes anglais correspondants. Une édition récente de *Colomba* demande constamment: "Commentez l'emploi de *modes* après tel verbe. Discutez l'emploi de *temps* dans telle expression." Nous sommes comme le colonel, nous ne comprenons rien à l'affaire. Il s'agit du verbe *sembler*: "il semble" demande que le verbe de la proposition suivante soit mis au subjonctif, "il me semble" demande l'indicatif; c'est *des modes*, de l'emploi *des modes*, qu'il s'agit. Et de même, c'est *le temps*, l'emploi *du temps* d'un certain verbe qu'il faudrait dire dans l'autre cas.

On nous demande encore "où se placent les adjectifs qui sont *qualifiés* par des adverbes." Pardon, les adverbes français ne qualifient pas, ils *modifient*. Une grammaire récente, qui aurait besoin d'une centaine de retouches, nous apprend que "les adjectifs

en général s'accordent en genre et en nombre avec les noms qu'ils *déterminent*." Pardon, encore, les adjectifs "grand, curieux, favorable," etc., sont des adjectifs qualificatifs; leur fonction n'est pas de déterminer, mais de qualifier. Et puisque nous en sommes au chapitre de l'adjectif, il ne faut pas dire aux élèves d'écrire au tableau "les numéros cardinaux de vingt à trente"; c'est évidemment une distraction, et c'est "les adjectifs numéraux cardinaux" qu'on a voulu dire. Ne disons pas, non plus, "le subjonctif du présent," comme on veut nous faire dire; on dit: le présent du subjonctif. Un éditeur de Daudet nous pose cette question: Quelle sorte de pendule les Schwanthaler avaient-ils? et il ajoute: Pourquoi n'y a-t-il pas de "s" *sur* le mot Schwanthaler? Eh mais, nous ne savons pas trop; nous ne savons pas que l's avait la vilaine habitude de se mettre à cheval sur le dos des autres lettres. L'auteur veut dire, sans doute, que pour exprimer la même idée en anglais on mettrait une *s* à Schwanthaler, tandis qu'en français on ne met pas d's à Schwanthaler. Ajoutons qu'au lieu de: Donnez-moi des synonymes *pour* hôpital, *pour* médecin, etc., on dit plutôt: Donnez-moi des synonymes *d'*hôpital, *de* médecin, etc., et qu'au lieu d'une description d'une scène, ou d'une définition d'un mot, c'est plutôt *la* description d'une scène ou *la* définition d'un mot qu'il convient de demander. Que si, enfin, les auteurs d'une certaine grammaire tiennent absolument à savoir si "les élèves dont les devoirs sont sur le bureau du professeur sont intelligents ou bêtes," c'est affaire de goût; les auteurs ne violent cette fois aucune règle de grammaire.

Il est certain que tout n'est pas pour le mieux dans le meilleur des mondes. Faut-il lever les bras au ciel et s'écrier avec Bélise:

Veux-tu toute ta vie offenser la grammaire?

Nous serions bien avancés! Et nos élèves surtout en seraient bien avancés! La situation n'est peut-être pas si mauvaise, après tout. L'enseignement du français sera meilleur demain qu'il n'est aujourd'hui, et nos livres de demain vaudront mieux que ceux d'aujourd'hui. C'est un fait, d'abord, que nous avons des livres excellents que ne déparent pas les fautes que nous venons de relever. C'est un fait également, et les ouvrages que nous venons de passer en revue le prouvent, que la méthode vivante n'est plus le monopole exclusif de quelques petits établissements particuliers, mais

que nos grandes universités et les écoles de nos grandes villes lui ouvrent leurs portes toutes grandes. Et le fait le plus significatif, enfin, c'est qu'un très grand nombre de professeurs américains appliquent aujourd'hui cette méthode, qui n'avait guère pour elle hier encore qu'un nombre peu considérable de maîtres étrangers. L'enseignement du français s'est beaucoup développé ces dernières années; il a grandi un peu vite, il va parfois un peu trop vite; mais il a l'avenir pour lui. Comme le John Harris d'Edmond About, "il ne compte que sur soi, ne s'attend qu'à soi, ne s'étonne de rien, ne croit rien impossible, ne recule jamais, croit tout, espère tout, essaie de tout, triomphe de tout, se relève s'il tombe, recommence s'il échoue, ne s'arrête jamais, ne perd jamais courage, et va droit devant lui en sifflant sa chanson."

University of Maine

FREE COMPOSITION IN FIRST SEMESTER

By E. M. LEBERT

WHEN students take up a new subject, they are generally quite enthusiastic about it; they love new things. But after a few weeks they often change their mind, they work only for credits, and are utterly devoid of real ambition: their interest has died out. This, if I am not mistaken, is specially true of French. After a few days of vivid interest, many consider the study of French a kind of dull exercise in which one replaces English words by French words, or vice versa, according to a more or less capricious set of rules. Any originality or individuality seems to be barred and, as a result, students devote their time to more interesting activities. Is it possible to keep up the enthusiasm of the first days and if so how can we do it?

It has been the good luck of the present writer to have a class which grew more and more interested and almost from the beginning found French a medium for the expression of their own ideas and feelings. They enjoyed in it an opportunity to use not only their reason, their power of observation, and their memory, but also their elementary creative imagination.

The excellent grammar we were using, like many other excellent elementary books, had a very useful exercise called oral drill. Under this title the book had the special difficulties of the lesson (grammar and vocabulary) presented in some twenty to fifty ready made phrases between which there was no connection. My students asked me if we could not learn French without this special drill. I answered I was afraid not; but I asked, in my turn, if we could not make the dull exercise interesting by playing with it the game of completing sentences. I demonstrated how it could be done with the vocabulary we had studied.¹ The lesson was on contraction. The first phrase was: "to the professor." The first student called upon gave the easiest form: "L'élève parle au professeur." A second one volunteered: "Il donne un cahier au professeur." After a suggesting gesture we had: "Il donne la main au professeur," which brought at once: "La maitresse

¹I had added a number of words to the vocabulary of the first lessons, especially the parts of the body, with the necessary remarks about the use of the definite article with the latter.

d'école donne la main au professeur." This sentence was a success and was followed by: "Elle donne le bras au professeur." A boy, remembering an example I had given, exclaimed: "Attention au professeur!" Everybody laughed and I thought that this phrase could be developed into a story. Here is the story: "Emile est dans la salle de classe. Il est à la troisième table entre Paul et Henri. Il a un livre sur la table. Il a les yeux sur le livre mais il a la tête à Newburg . . . Le professeur a les yeux sur Emile. Il a une règle sous le bras. Emile, attention au professeur!" The dreaded exercise had become interesting without ceasing to be a rigid training drill for our grammar and vocabulary. The mind of the students had free play and this freedom was enjoyed equally by teacher and pupils.

We kept on with that kind of drill for weeks, without neglecting any exercise offered by our grammar; in fact we treated many of them in the same way as the oral drills. Noticing that one or two students had tried to connect two or three detached verb phrases, I encouraged that new use of the creative imagination. We called it "the dot puzzle game." And it developed new interest. An example will make clear why we enjoyed our work. In a somewhat advanced drill we had this series of unconnected sentences to translate: "He will go. . . . Where are you going? etc." We had the following variations on the theme: Il ira à Chicago par le train de neuf heures. Il y va toutes les semaines. Y alliez-vous avec lui—Vous dites que Dana n'ira pas au théâtre ce soir. Je vous dis qu'il ira. Voyez, il y va maintenant. Y alliez-vous aussi?—Paul ira certainement à l'université si Marie y va.—Qu'alliez vous dire? I might quote other individualizations of these three English verb phrases where the connecting link was "going to war," "going to a friend's home," "going to a game." Of course it took a long time to come to such variety but the results are based on the principle illustrated. Perhaps a final example may be of interest. The sentence given in the book was: "Nobody has taken it." In trying to give life to the word group a student wrote: "Quand je demande à ma mère où est ma robe, elle me répond: Personne ne l'a prise."

Thus was added to the pedagogical principle that "repetition is the key to learning" the complementary principle that the *key to learning a living language is lifelike variety in personal reaction.*

As may be readily understood, this habit of completing and connecting somebody else's thought developed self-reliance and tended to self expression which was bound to culminate in free composition.

Very early in the course some students tried to write stories, but instead of making their small vocabulary go a long way, they hunted for words in their dictionary and with their own logic, they wrote unknown forms of verbs, making sentences with a very special construction of their own. They stumbled against unforeseen difficulties at each step. They had to be reminded of the fact that they knew very little French. However they were not to be discouraged. So I tried to give them the right attitude by the following analogy: "You do not start dancing in a hall without paying attention to the walls; else you will soon be brought back to your sense of reality. . . . You do not stop dancing either because there are walls to the hall. . . . Realize what your own limitations in French are; always keep within your actual knowledge. Move freely inside the walls which surround you, but avoid any word, any form that you have not yet found in your text: it might mean bumping against a mistake." Proceeding by example day after day we made up stories with our limited vocabulary and sentences, cutting out details which could not be expressed with the words we had learned. Here is a story told after 12 to 15 lessons.

SAMEDI SOIR

Il est 7 heures. Un grand garçon sonne à la porte de Mlle Hélène. La bonne ouvre la porte.—Mademoiselle Hélène est-elle à la maison?—Oui, Monsieur. Voulez-vous entrer dans le salon, s'il vous plaît.—Une heure après, Mademoiselle Hélène entre dans le salon. Elle a son chapeau sur la tête. "Bonsoir, Monsieur Paul.—Bonsoir, Mademoiselle. Voulez-vous aller au cinéma?—Avec plaisir."

Ils sont à la porte du cinéma. Paul cherche dans sa poche. Il donne 50 sous: "Deux billets, s'il vous plaît . . ." Ils entrent . . . Paul donne les billets.

Après le cinéma ils entrent au "Candyland." Mlle Hélène aime les bonbons. Paul cherche dans sa poche: il donne un dollar. . . . Il est onze heures moins cinq. Ils sont devant la porte

de Mlle Hélène, mais ils ne sonnent pas. Hélène ne veut pas entrer avant onze heures. Onze heures sonnent. Hélène donne la main à Paul. "Bonsoir, Paul, merci." La bonne ouvre la porte. "Au revoir, Monsieur Paul." Mlle Hélène entre dans la maison. Paul n'entre pas. . . . Il regarde la porte.

At times to avoid a form omitted by our text book we had to seek a slight circumlocution for our thought. Fearing the special difficulty of the form "ils veulent," our grammar had not given it in its first conjugation of *vouloir*. Students wanted to say "Mr. and Mrs. — of New York want to go to Washington," and of course wrote "voulent". I showed them how they could complete their drill on *vouloir* by going to the table of irregular verbs, but I asked them if we could not express the thought without using that form. The result was: "Monsieur X de New York veut aller à Washington avec Mme X. . . ." In fact we always tried to find more than one form for the same idea, for instance, we said, "Le chapeau de Mlle Barbara est sur sa tête. Mlle B. a son chapeau sur la tête."

Finally, four weeks after our first French lesson a student wrote the following original composition, reproduced here directly from the student's copy-book with all its mistakes.

Jean est l'ami de Pierre. Pierre est vieux et est professeur à G. C. Jean est élève là. Jean est le fils d'un vieux ami de Pierre. Jean est à la table dans la maison de Pierre. Pierre dit: Où allez-vous après le collège? En Juillet je vais à Philadelphia. A Philadelphia? J'ai un ami à Philadelphia. Il est Monsieur Schmidt. Je vais écrire à Monsieur Schmidt et dire: "Jean est mon ami: il va à Philadelphia en Juillet. Il est un très bon garçon et est le fils de mon vieux ami Jones."

En Juillet Jean va à Philadelphia. Là il rencontre Mr. Schmidt. Schmidt saisit Jean et dit: "Ici est Jean le ami de mon vieux ami Pierre. Va-t-il bien avec Pierre? Voulez-vous aller avec moi à la maison? Sommes amis. Vos amis sont mes amis."

The composition was read in class from the student's paper. The author was looked upon with wondering eyes when I gave his name. After due praise for the successful handling of the vocabulary, we passed to a less agreeable exercise: mistakes were corrected by the class from the grammatical point of view. In order to give a clear example of the method we followed, when we had evolved it, I shall suppose here that we treated this story as we

treated many others later. Other expressions for the same thought were to be found. At first a single word was replaced by another: "Jean est à la table," became "Jean dine." To avoid a difficult form like "soyons," which to be sure we found in our grammar, we substituted this well known expression, "Nous allons être amis." Finally we recast a few sentences for practice. "Un élève de G. C., Jean, est dans la maison d'un professeur. Le professeur aime beaucoup Jean parce qu'il est le fils de son vieux ami Jones. Jean dine avec le professeur. . . ." The form *vieil* was not in our book and so we kept the form *vieux* to avoid confusion in the mind of the students at so early a stage. Quite often some members of the class started to smile: the composition which was so good was all made over again: but soon they understood that we were not merely trying to better the composition, but were learning how to vary the expression of a thought. In my book I noted down an attempt to develop the last part of the above story: a person comes with a letter of introduction to a friend of his aunt. The purpose of all these exercises was to have the students collaborate in the making of a story and invite them to write stories by themselves: it looked so simple.

In fact a little more initiative was shown after this first composition. The expressions were more varied and in about a week a second student had a story. The first successful boy kept on writing with more and more confidence. A month later eleven out of twelve students were making original compositions. So, for our second monthly quiz (November 19), I ventured to offer the following suggestion: "You will write at your leisure original compositions using your own words only: go over your story two or three times at least, consulting your written list of ordinary mistakes. Then memorize your story. You will be allowed to write it from memory as a part of your examination. Of course no written paper must be used in the class room: use your brains only." All of us were astounded at the results. We had twelve original compositions in clear if not perfect French. For the examination the students had worked on their composition more intensely than they would have done in ordinary circumstances, and in preparing and polishing their story they had reviewed thoroughly their French for a direct application. The subjects treated were mostly anecdotes of travel or children's stories. Whoever knows young Americans must expect these stories to be

"funny." They are most of the time, but occasionally one finds something deeper.

The following example was written on December 8, three weeks later. The story given here has been corrected in the way described above in collaboration with the writer. A few mistakes have disappeared and a few sentences that were too complex were simplified, but we did not add or change a single thought.

NOËL

Il y a 1920 ans, en Décembre, une jeune femme et son mari étaient dans une petite ville qu'on appelle Bethléem. Ils avaient demandé une chambre pour passer la nuit. Mais il n'y avait pas de chambre pour eux dans l'hôtel. Ils étaient donc allés au bâtiment pour les chevaux.

Cette nuit-là, il y avait dans les champs des hommes sages et du ciel ils ont entendu ceci: "N'ayez pas peur, mais allez à la ville qu'on appelle Bethléem. Là vous trouverez un petit enfant." Donc ces hommes sages sont allés à B. . . et ils ont trouvé le petit garçon et quand ils l'ont vu, ils l'ont aimé. Ils ont apporté beaucoup de choses pour le petit Jésus, et pour sa mère Marie.

Puis ils sont sortis du bâtiment et ils ont dit à tout le monde ce qu'ils avaient vu.

Maintenant le monde est meilleur et plus aimable, parce que cet enfant a été bon et aimable, le meilleur et le plus aimable des enfants des hommes.

Dimanche, dans notre église nous donnerons une petite fête pour les enfants pauvres, parce que nous aimons ce petit enfant que les hommes sages ont trouvé dans la ville de Bethléem. Voulez-vous venir et donner quelque chose aussi?

A religious soul expressed its feelings in this simple story. For our special purpose we should notice that, although many details of the gospels or Christmas traditions are left out for want of the necessary vocabulary, the spiritual atmosphere is kept. This has been one of the general features of our stories: We tried to keep the atmosphere without giving all details. Another characteristic of this legend-like story is the repetition of the same words which gives an almost primitive impression. This has been extensively used by students in their compositions. Finally we notice that a word too technical for our stage of French has been replaced by a periphrase of more usual words: *Stable* became "le bâtiment pour les chevaux."

Giving scope to the students' ingenuity brought real originality in their work. A student, trying to describe a friend of hers who is too fond of her bed in the morning, is stopped by the lack of the proper word for 'went to sleep again.' Unable to write directly she had recourse to a description: "Les autres jeunes filles passent devant sa porte en chantant. Hélène ne les entend pas maintenant." Now I doubt very much if the girl could have expressed so well the atmosphere of the early morning in the dormitory had she been able to hunt in a dictionary and write (let us suppose without any mistakes) "Hélène s'est rendormie." Necessity is the mother of invention. Another found an expression for the idea of death in these words: "Il a fermé les yeux pour toujours." The grief of his wife was depicted by saying, "Elle a les yeux rouges." If we want to describe the feelings of a little boy who has stolen his first smoke, we hear his mother telling him: "Votre figure est toute blanche!"

So by cutting out unessential details, by bringing more or less successful circumstantial evidence to express the dry, bare fact when the direct word is lacking, by using repetitions when we want intensity, we often have original composition and we may even arrive at rhythmical sequence. A few times students reached a near-verse form. Let us quote an instance.

Toutes les nations ont leurs plaisirs: l'Allemand boit de la bière, le Français boit du vin, et parce que l'Américain ne peut pas en boire, il fume la cigarette: il la fume dans la maison il la fume sur le chemin: il la fume pendant qu'il travaille, et la fume pendant qu'il joue: il la fume pendant qu'il mange et l'autre jour un garçon a voulu la fumer pendant qu'il a été dans son lit. Dans la nuit il a trouvé son lit en feu. Ce garçon ouvre toujours ma porte.

Avez-vous une allumette?
Avez-vous une cigarette?
Toujours ce garçon me dit
Ou bien avez-vous un sac
De presque bon tabac
Pour fumer le jour et la nuit?

It goes without saying that the more than 200 free composition written by the twelve students of this class in about 15 weeks of the first semester are of unequal value, but they have certainly kept up the interest of all to the present day. The students feel that French is truly a living language and they use it rather freely in

class. After being coaxed for two or three weeks to tell their stories in class themselves, a few of them at first, then rapidly all of them, started to memorize their own compositions for oral work. An hour a week was set for our story telling. We understand each other very readily² and occasionally we have replies to what has been stated by a fellow student. A kind of weekly polemic was carried on in this way on the interesting subject: Who has the best lot, husband or wife? We then had the idea that we might have debates in French. The first one took place on April 14 on this question: *Est-il bon d'avoir la coéducation dans les collèges Américains?* A judge was invited for the occasion and was no less interested than we were in the results accomplished. I realize that this detail is outside the limits of my subject, but it shows how far the special treatment of vocabulary by free composition may lead students whose interest is supported.

The experiment is so encouraging that it seems desirable to have it tried on a larger scale. My fellow instructors have been kind enough to adopt the method in their classes. The result was a new interest in the language studied. But to have the best results, we all realize that training the students from the beginning along the lines described in this paper would give them a better chance of success than if they are taken at the middle of a year.

Free the student from slavish use of his book; give all his faculties a chance to appear in his study. Without sacrificing thorough discipline, leave room for initiative; he will accept the opportunity with pleasure, and he may be able to do more than could otherwise be expected of him. . . . I do not know if he will think in French, but he will certainly think of French, because it will give his mind a chance to exert itself along its natural lines. It may even help him in his thinking and in his English composition. Many who would resent being shown in English once more the elementary rules of language and thought, find it acceptable in learning a new language. The greatest value of teaching modern language in the way described may be in giving scope to reflection and thus perhaps in building up stronger foundations for thought and expression.

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²In a few special tests I told new stories in French. Ten minutes were given to reproduce the story from memory. At least 10 out of 12 pupils wrote compositions in which all details could easily be recognized in spite of many mistakes in spelling.

FRENCH VERB TABLES.

A CRITICAL STUDY. I.

By ERWIN ESCHER

PRACTICALLY all French grammars, most elementary readers and composition books, and many dictionaries of the French language present the morphology of the verbs, or at least of the irregular verbs in more or less compact tables. The arrangement varies greatly, both in the presentation of the "regular" paradigms and in that of the "irregular" verbs.

The object of this article is to study critically the advantages and merits of different arrangements, as exemplified in books that are widely used and in some recent publications.

It seems advisable to discuss first, what constitutes a regular conjugation; second, how the inflection of each verb is presented; third, how the verbs not exemplified by some regular paradigm—the "irregular" verbs—are listed.

I. What is a Regular Conjugation?

The presentation of the morphology of the French verb reduces itself, in the last analysis, to a tabulation of all the forms of *one* type-verb for each group of analogous verbs; and to an enumeration of *all* the verbs belonging to the smaller groups. For the verbs of formerly four, more recently three groups, no list is given. These groups are presented as "regular" conjugations, and distinguished from each other by the ending of the infinitive, the tacit understanding being that all verbs not enumerated elsewhere belong to one of these "regular" conjugations.

The "regular" groups are very unequal in size. One comprises 3,000 or more verbs, one ca. 300, one (the *rompre* group) 15 simple and some 30 compound verbs, the last one (the *devoir-recevoir* group) only 6, of which 5 are compounds of the obsolete Lat. *cāpere*, V. L. **capēre* —?—.

The number of the "regular" conjugations may be said to have been determined by the classic tradition until not so very long ago. As the supposed "declension" of French nouns continued the Latin grammatical categories, so also the four classical Latin conjugations found a modern re-incarnation in the "four regular conjuga-

tions" of French grammar, the one in *-oir* being second, in analogy with the Latin one in *-ére*. Yet the weakness of the *recevoir*-group was evident. *Recevoir* is not a direct descendant from any *-ére* verb, but a deserter from the *-ere*, modern *-re* conjugation. The change of "conjugation" was brought about by changing the infinitive only. The rest remained unaffected by any analogy with the Latin "second" conjugation. This view is found expressed in school books in France. "La troisième conjugaison (*-oir*) n'est qu'une variété de la quatrième (*-re*), dont elle ne diffère qu'au présent de l'infinitif et au passé défini.", write Larive and Fleury.¹

Slowly an emancipation from the classical tradition took place.² As a first step away from the Latin, *recevoir* lost its second place to *finir*, and came to be placed third or fourth. In France such popular books as *Larive and Fleury*, or *Brachet and Dussouchet*, still have them thus, and in America "The New Chardenal" represents this stage.

But a new principle of classification, the distinction into "living" and "dead" conjugations, came and supplanted the Latin categories of grammar. The evidence of this in France is books that try to introduce historical material into the presentation of all chapters of grammar, not least of those dealing with morphology. In America the new current carried off the *recevoir* group from the list of the "regular" conjugations. *Rompre* came to be looked upon as representing the dead conjugation, *finir* the doubtfully alive one, *parler* the living. All new books have only three regular conjugations. Most authors do not explain the reason for this procedure. It may not have appeared wise to them to make the already confused question of the French verb worse confounded by introducing historical material. But L. Cardon, by referring to the two living and one dead conjugation of the historical gram-

¹ La Troisième année de grammaire, 51 ed. 1905. Paris, A. Colin. p. 98.

² If the small 'recevoir' group may cause a 'regular conjugation' to be set aside for it, it would only be logical to consider as 'regular' such larger groups as those formed by, e.g., the *dormir* type and by verbs in *-uire*, or those in *-indre*. As a matter of fact this was done by N. Hamel in 'Grammatical Exercises upon the French Language Compared with the English,' 2. ed., London 1798, where ten regular conjugations are distinguished, and by N. G. Dufief in 'Nature Displayed in her Mode of Teaching Language to Man . . . adapted to the French,' 3 ed. Philadelphia 1910, where eight regular conjugations occur.

mar justifies the classification of the verbs under three main heads. The explanation is given in small print, without emphasis.³

The "dead conjugation" is said to include only about 80 verbs, with present in *s*, and pres. part. in *ant*. The dead conjugation is subdivided into three groups:

1. in *-ir*: *sortir*
2. in *-r*: *voir*
3. in *-re*: *rompre*

Are we likely to stop here and retain three conjugations? Is the position of *rompre* as a regular verb so much stronger than that of *recevoir*? One might well question it. As an example of the view, that only two conjugations need be taught, F. Hornemann⁴ may be quoted.

He advocates a tabulation of the forms of any French verb in an arrangement closely resembling the one adopted by Messrs. W. A. Nitze and E. H. Wilkins.⁵ Hornemann distinguishes *formation* of the stem from *flectional endings*. In the latter, which are tabulated along with the full forms of the paradigm, he distinguishes signs of time, mood and person, by means of different type and position. Since the personal endings are the same for all but the *-er* verbs, he comes to the conclusion that only two conjugations should be distinguished: "It is then unnecessary to require the learning of either a third or of a fourth conjugation. In addition to the infinitive, one needs to insist only on the peculiarities of *formation*, which presents considerable difficulties only in the *present system* of tenses. In the great majority of cases these difficulties arise through the operation of *two important phonetic laws*, of which one has to do with *the changes of the stem vowel under the influence of syllable stress*, the other with *the modifica-*

³ A Practical French Course, 1917, Silver Burdett & Co. p. 193. Cf. also H. E. Berthon, *Première grammaire française* New York, Dutton Co., p. IX: "La seule classification qui soit historiquement inattaquable, tout en restant commode au point de vue pratique, est celle qui consiste à diviser les verbes en deux conjugaisons vivantes et une conjugaison morte." And footnote: "Voyez les grammaires historiques de Clédat, Darmesteter, Salmon, etc."

⁴ Zur Reform des Neusprachlichen Unterrichts, 1885, 1886, Hannover, Carl Meyer. II. p. 37.

⁵ Discussed hereafter in a second article on French Verb-Tables.

tion of the final stem consonant in contact with flectional endings."
 . . .⁶

The great majority of the verbs belonging to the dead conjugation drop the final stem-consonant, if it becomes silent before consonantal inflectional endings. The keeping of *p* in *rompre*, or of *d* in the verbs of the *vendre* group is really an orthographic anomaly. But even if this anomaly, and the past participle in *u*, be accepted as "regular," *rompre* is still the only strictly regular verb of its group. The *-andre*, *-endre*, *-ondre*, *-ardre*, *-erdre*, *-ordre*, verbs are "irregular" in the third pers. pres. ind. For that reason some books mention the group in its proper place in the list of irregular verbs, but without enumerating the verbs belonging to it.⁷

Yet the group is only slightly larger than the *-aindre*, *-eindre*, *-oindre* group which is always given in full. Enumeration would also be desirable on account of possible confusion between *-er* and *-re* verbs, even by Frenchmen. Witness the obsolescent *ardre*, which, according to the Larousse dictionary, takes also the infinitive *arder*. The only book that to my knowledge enumerates the verbs of the *vendre* type in full is *The French Verb, its Forms and Tense Uses*. Nitze & Wilkins. University of Chicago Press, 1914.

If there are reasons for questioning the regularity of the *vendre* group, there are doubts also of the regularity of the inchoative *-ir* verbs. Thus Larive and Fleury⁸ write of the *-ir* verbs in general: "Les verbes qui appartiennent à cette conjugaison se partagent en deux sections: La première comprend tous les verbes dits irréguliers, comme *partir*, etc. . . . qui sont au contraire très réguliers. . . . La deuxième section comprend tous les verbes qui se conjuguent comme *finir*. . . . L'intercalation de cette syllabe *iss* dans certains temps et son omission dans d'autres constituent une véritable irrégularité pour ces verbes. . . ."

⁶ Man braucht also weder eine dritte, noch eine vierte Konjugation besonders lernen zu lassen. Ausser dem Infinitiv braucht man nur die Eigentuemlichkeiten der *Formation* einprägen zu lassen, welche ihrerseits nur in der *Präsensgruppe* erhebliche Schwierigkeiten darbietet. Der Hauptsache nach sind dieselben durch das Wirken *zwei grosser Lautgesetze* hervorgerufen, von welchen das eine die *Veränderung des Stammvokals unter dem Einfluss des Worttones*, das andere die *des auslautenden Stammkonsonanten im Zusammentreffen mit der Flexionen* betrifft. . .

⁷ E.g. Fraser and Squair, *A French Grammar*, Heath 1901. p. 154.

⁸ *Ibid.* p. 96.

In fact, from the pedagogical point of view, the inchoative conjugation offers great difficulty, and must be drilled intensively, while the *partir* group causes little trouble, once the singular of the present indicative is mastered. Larive and Fleury do not draw the practical conclusion from the above quoted remarks. They classify the verbs in the time honored way into four conjugations according to the infinitive (*-er, -ir, -oir, -re*). But they make the following remark:

"Ces quatre conjugaisons peuvent se réduire à deux, la première et la quatrième. Car, sauf pour les terminaisons de l'infinitif et du participe passé, la seconde conjugaison ne diffère de la quatrième qu'en ce qu'on intercale souvent la syllabe *-iss* entre le radical et les terminaisons, et la troisième conjugaison n'est manifestement qu'une variété de la quatrième."

Perhaps we may state it thus: There are two conjugations: the parisyllabic, living, vocalic *-e, -es, -e* conjugation in which singular and plural have the same number of syllables throughout the present; and the imparisyllabic, dead, consonantal *-s, -s, -t* conjugation, in which the singular of the present indicative and imperative are one syllable shorter than the plural. The verbs of the first conjugation are too numerous to be listed. The exceptions are few in number and can be listed.⁹

In the second conjugation there is an important group, too numerous to be listed, in which a syllable is added to the stem in the "present tense system." All the other verbs, belonging to the second conjugation, can be listed, and most of them, being of very frequent occurrence, must be studied individually or in small groups, in order to avoid mistakes. As to the most important common characteristic of these verbs, it may be pointed out that final stem-consonants are modified or dropped in pronunciation,

⁹ My conclusion I found anticipated by Direktor Brennecke in the 'Program der Realschule zu Colberg 1853' who says on p. 18:

"Es giebt im Französischen nicht vier Conjugationen, wie man in Nachbetung der lateinischen Grammatik annimmt; es giebt nur zwei verschiedene Weisen der Abhandlung, eine *alte* und eine *neue* Conjugation, oder eine starke und eine schwache. Auch diese beiden Conjugationen bieten nur in wenig Formen Verschiedenheiten dar . . . für alle übrigen Formen findet Übereinstimmung für alle Zeitwörter statt, mit alleiniger Ausnahme einiger Modifikationen, die durch die allgemeinen Wortbildungsgesetze der französischen Sprache herbeigeführt werden und keineswegs in das Schema der vier Conjugationen zu bringen sind."

and often in writing too, before the consonantal inflectional endings of the singular present indicative and imperative, according to definite rules,—with the exception of *r*, and *m* or *n*, if followed by another final stem consonant.

The best example for a perfectly regular verb of this conjugation, if *rire* be objected to on account of the strong preterite and past participle, would be *suivre* or *bouillir*, or any other verb of the *dormir* group. The dropping of the final stem-consonant in the singular of the present indicative and imperative is not any more irregular than the disappearance of the double *s* in like position in the *finir* verbs.

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SONDERN VERSUS ABER; SINO(QUE) VERSUS PERO

By JOHN A. HESS

STUDENTS of German or of Spanish are always perplexed about a proper rendition of the English conjunction *but*. I believe the trouble is due to the rules usually given. The following rules taken from widely used German and Spanish grammars are typical.

"*Sondern* is used only after a negative, and introduces a contrast which excludes or contradicts what goes before."

"*Sondern* in asserting its own clause also emphatically contradicts or corrects the preceding clause, the two clauses being represented as mutually exclusive."

"Two ideas absolutely excluding one another are contrasted by *sondern*, hence *sondern* can be used only after a negative; two ideas forming a contrast, but not absolutely excluding one another, are contrasted by *aber*."

"*Sondern* is only used after a negative, and introduces a contradictory statement, while *aber*, which is used after either an affirmative or negative proposition, concedes the statement of the first proposition, and introduces a limitation or a contrast."

"*Sino* is used only to introduce a positive idea in direct contrast to a preceding negative, and in this case the preceding verb is understood and not repeated. If there is a different verb in the second part of the negation, 'but' is translated by *sino que*."

"*Sino* is used only after a negative clause and introduces a reinforcing or contrasting affirmation with the verb omitted."

"*Sino* is used after a negative statement that is offset by an affirmative statement."

These last two definitions seem to me to be much more satisfactory than *all* the preceding ones. Let us consider, however, the following sentences in order to determine, if possible, the value of the above rules.

1. The man is not rich, but poor.

Der Mann ist nicht reich, sondern arm.

El hombre no es rico, sino pobre.

2. The man is not merely rich, but also generous.
Der Mann ist nicht nur reich, sondern auch freigebig.
El hombre no es solamente rico, sino generoso también.
3. This man never works, but spends all his time dancing.
Dieser Mann arbeitet nie, sondern er verbringt seine ganze
Zeit im Tanzen.
Este hombre no trabaja nunca, sino que pasa todo su tiempo
bailando.
4. This man is not rich, but he gives money to the poor.
Dieser Mann ist nicht reich, aber er gibt den Armen Geld.
Este hombre no es rico, pero da dinero a los pobres.
5. She is not very beautiful, but good.
Sie ist nicht sehr schön, aber gut.
Ella no es muy hermosa, pero buena sí.

Let us consider now these sentences in the light of the first rules stated. Does the fact that a man is *poor* contradict or exclude the fact *that he is not rich*? Are the two parts of the sentence mutually exclusive? Does the idea that a man is *not merely rich* preclude the thought that he is *also generous*? The statement that a man *spends all his time dancing* hardly seems to me to contradict the assertion that he *never works*. On the contrary, in sentences 1 to 3, the second part of the sentence *replaces* or *supplants* what is stated as a negative truth in the first part by something positive and specific, rather than *contradicts* it. What these grammarians probably meant was that the idea contained in the *verb*, *predicate adjective* or *predicate noun* of the first part, considered *exclusive of the negative particle*, is contradicted or corrected in the second part, but this is not evident from their statement of the rule. In sentences 4 and 5 there is no such *supplanting* or *affirmative restatement*. The second part merely adds *supplementary information*.

My pupils have always found a rule which I formulated adequate and easy of comprehension. I give it in the hope that it will prove useful to others:

When that which is merely stated negatively in the first part of a sentence is *replaced* (*supplanted*) by something positive and specific in the second, the conjunction *but* is translated by *sondern* [*sino* (*que*)]. If the second part merely adds *supplementary information*, *aber* [*pero*] is used.

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VISUALIZING NOUN CLAUSES WITH *QUE*

By C. SCOTT WILLIAMS

IN TEACHING elementary Spanish to high-school pupils we must devise methods of awakening and of clarifying language concepts and we must not depend too much on the use of grammatical terms. I find that sometimes a story or a conundrum with an unexpected outcome will serve as an outstanding peg on which to hang a new language concept or to bring out a difference in idiom. I have been using with some success a simple blackboard diagram representing the ground plan of two adjoining rooms with connecting doorway as a means of visualizing the relationship between the main verb and the noun clause introduced by *que*, and of preparing the way for a clear distinction between noun clauses with the subjunctive and noun clauses in indirect discourse.

Quotation marks in English, and the dash in Spanish, are an easily understood visualization of the objectival relationship of the quoted expression; but the indirect question and the indirect discourse introduced by *que* do not stand out so clearly in the sentence and the pupil needs help in recognizing them and in learning to use them correctly in composition.

For this reason I begin the use of my diagram with the teaching of the past tense and especially with the use of the "past-future" as the substitute for the future in indirect discourse. It is easy to get the pupil to form at the same time a clear idea of the meaning of "sequence of tenses" as illustrated by the sentences: I said, "I shall go," and, I said I would go.

INDICATIVO		INDICATIVO	
Me escribe Juan	que	vendrá mañana	
Nos han dicho		parten esta tarde	
Le avisaron		lo comprarían	
Yo le diría		hablaba demasiado	
Dígale usted		no voy	

Instead of calling *que* a conjunction and letting it go at that, I draw my diagram of the two rooms with half-open door between, in which I insert the *que*, saying that sometimes English speaking people live in a one-room house, as for example, "I said I would go," but that the Spanish speaking people always insist on the partition wall and the connecting door, *que*. I spend considerable time teaching discourse verbs, not only *decir* and *contar*, but also *pensar*, *preguntar*, *responder*, *creer*, and even *soñar*. As this point is not emphasized in the grammars, I make the pupils compete in preparing lists of discourse verbs, making up sentences in Spanish in both direct and indirect discourse, watching for the corresponding changes in person as well as in tense. They will learn what is an indirect question and that *donde* and *si* may also become doorways into indirect discourse.

In taking up the Subjunctive of noun clauses introduced by *que*, I review thoroughly what has been established concerning our discourse verbs in which *que* is a substitute for the quotation marks. They must learn that there is another very distinct group of verbs that are also followed by *que* introducing a noun or objective clause, for which there may or may not be in English the corresponding conjunction "that." Here again the diagram is used with *que* standing in the doorway. The verbs are taken up, one class at a time, and a complete list of verbs of *desire* prepared, then of *command*, and the like, following the order given in the grammar that may be in use. First, however, sentences are given in which there is no change of person, sentences belonging to the "one-room house," as for example, *Deseo estudiar*; *Siento no haber venido*.

INDICATIVO	SUBJUNTIVO
Usted desea (ir, venir, etc.)	yo vaya, venga, hable, aprenda
He ordenado a Juan	vaya, trabaje traiga, vea
El pide a María	(ella) le ayude
Esperamos	usted nos acompañe
	que /
Importa mucho	nosotros lo hagamos bien
Me alegro de	ellos ya estén aliviados
Usted no cree	ellas vengan a tiempo. ¿verdad?
Le extraña mucho	ustedes lo hayan hecho

But with the change of person, we find we must go through the door, *que*, and come out into a new room called the Subjunctive. As there has been a change of person, the first thing we meet on going through the door is either the noun or the pronoun representing that different person which is the subject of the following verb. With the diagram before the class it is easy to show that it is the meaning of the main verb that determines the meaning of the subjoined clause, and hence the name, "Subjunctive," and that there is no change in the meaning of the verb in the subjunctive from the meaning it would have in the indicative, but that the subjunctive is an accommodating or sign-form which we use to bring out the more clearly the special meaning of the main verb.

While this visualization may seem cumbersome to some, I find that it gives the pupil something to grasp and to hold to, until he works his way through to a clear concept of the wide use of the subjunctive to show shades of meaning almost entirely lost in the English. He will have less difficulty later when he comes to take up relative and adverbial clauses. The same diagram helps to show the need of a change of tense in the subjunctive to correspond to the change of tense of the main verb.

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Reviews

CONTES CHOISIS DE DAUDET, with grammar reviews and exercises, edited by JAS. F. BROUSSARD. Charles Scribner's Sons, n.d. (La Dernière Classe, La Chèvre de M. Seguin, Le Siège de Berlin, Les Vieux, La Mule du Pape, Le Secret de Maître Cornille, Les Etoiles, L'Enfant Espion.)

Among French texts prepared in view of the increasing demand for the *direct method*, I know none more successful than Professor Broussard's selection of Daudet's stories. In the first place the short story lends itself easily to the necessarily *choppy* study. A novel or play loses much of its interest when a couple of pages only are to be absorbed for each assignment. The mere reading of one of Daudet's stories can be done first, if desired, in one or two lessons by a second year class. Then the students may return to the detailed study. The editor is to be congratulated first on his choice of the text. Furthermore the direct method apparatus is admirably planned. It consists of a questionnaire, grammatical review, set composition, subjects for free composition and phrases to be used in sentences. All are complete enough to give a thorough drill in oral and written reproduction of the couple of pages on which they are based. The student may use them also for models in composing similar exercises himself. They are intended to provide constant repetition, in varying forms, of fundamental principles. For instance the first grammatical review gives ten French sentences illustrating uses of the partitive construction; the second calls for the translation into French of ten English sentences containing partitive constructions. Brief notes follow each lesson. The vocabulary contains upwards of two thousand words; the pronunciation is always given in the notation of the Association Phonétique Internationale, briefly explained in a key. The book will provide matter for a semester of second year class-room work by the direct method.

In my own opinion the use of such texts should be supplemented by a considerable amount of rapid outside reading, tested by weekly quizzes. The following method has been found successful: Assign a certain number of pages of a fairly simple text: test the student's knowledge by choosing a few short phrases of which the exact context and significance in the plot are to be given. Salient points in the text may be brought out in this way.

Unfortunately the proof reading was not carefully done. The work deserves a second edition and with that in view I point out the omissions, misprints and errors which have come to my attention while using the text in the class-room. The following words are not included in the vocabulary nor are they explained in the notes: *affreux, boucher, bouchon, guirlande, mule, mulet, ohé, parle-*

ment, parterre, perron, rapprocher, rieur, secouer, sien, vitre. *La cigale*, defined in both note and vocabulary as *cricket*, means rather *cicada*. *Manière* is misspelled and so misplaced. *Moucheron*, defined only as *gnat*, means *youngster* on page 126. For the following phrase: "avec un tour et des coques jaunes" (p. 58, l. 30) the vocabulary fails to give the correct meaning of *tour* and of *coque*. *Un tour* refers to a band of false hair worn over the forehead; *des coques* refer to the manner in which peasant women often wear their hair, two half-egg shaped loops descending over the forehead, one on either side of the part. *Dans le principe* (p. 78, l. 12) might have been included in the vocabulary or explained in a note. It surely means "in the beginning" but contains also the idea of "in essence" as well as "before his (Tistet's) elevation." "Des pièces de cent sous qui filaient à plat" (p. 128, l. 11) surely means that the coins slid along on the flat side, and not, as the vocabulary says, "sail full speed." *Square*, (p. 126, l. 5) is defined as *square*. The word means, in French, an enclosed garden in the middle of a public place or square. I have recently given in these pages my own hypothesis as to the reason for the two readings, Pampelune or Pampérigouste (See p. 87 l. 14 and p. 93, l. 31 of this text). Pampérigouste is not an imaginary name, as one editor who adopts that reading states, but a small Provençal village which Daudet undoubtedly knew. It might be well to add to the note on *la Chèvre d'Or* (p. 117, ll. 2-3) a reference to the work of Daudet's fellow-countryman, Paul Arène. A. France (*La Vie Littéraire*, III, pp. 46 ff.) has a charming essay on his story, *La Chèvre d'Or*. It is to be hoped that some editor of *L'Enfant Espion* will explain why "on y mit du pétrole" (p. 126, l. 21) (in public gardens). Paris in 1871 should surely be an interesting study at present.

I have noted the following misprints: P. 3, question 24, *L'ordinaire* for *D'ordinaire*; p. 8, q. 21, *qu'est-ce qui* for *qu'est-ce qu'il*; p. 8, q. 24, *quelle* for *quel*; p. 13, q. 8, *eu* for *eue*; p. 13 q. 13, *Les tous petits* for *Les tout petits*; p. 16, l. 8; *Appollo* for *Apollo*; p. 34, l. 4, *lorsque un* for *lorsqu'un*; p. 42, l. 7, *Allemanagne* for *Allemagne*; p. 42, l. 10, *sourtout* for *surtout*; p. 51, l. 1, *Un lettre* for *Une lettre*; p. 51, l. 7, *perde* for *perdre*; p. 78, l. 19, *e vous* for *et vous*; p. 93, ll. 8-9, *pre-stance* for *pres-tance*; p. 99, l. 14, *heurs* for *heures*; p. 123, l. 5, *Pouissinière* for *Poussinière*; p. 140, l. 17, *eroiller* for *oreiller*.

The following notes need revision: p. 71, note 3: *des grandes piles* and similar constructions became so authorized by good usage that they are now allowed by ministerial decree. P. 75, foreword to grammar exercise, *il est certain* etc. Such impersonal constructions require the subjunctive only when doubt is implied by interrogation, negation or condition. P. 105, note 1: *Devan.* for *avant* is an intentional provincialism. The present day distinction was not made in earlier French. We may see relics of the older usage

in such phrases as "être gros Jean comme devant" or "les ci-devants" jestingly applied to the nobles since the Revolution.

Above all the following Anglicisms in the questions should be corrected: P. 8, q. 4, read *encore des leçons* for *une autre leçon*; p. 18, q. 10, read *suivi le conseil* for *accepté le conseil*; p. 84, q. 17, read *mis à* for *pris pour*; p. 104, q. 11, read *d'autres renseignements* for *d'autre information*; p. 138, q. 14, read *il s'est rendu compte* for *il a réalisé*.

BENJ. M. WOODBRIDGE

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CUBA Y LAS COSTUMBRES CUBANAS (1st or 2nd year)

By FRANK CARMAN EWART, 12mo, cloth, XIV+157 pages, illustrated. Ginn & Co.

This book is not simply a collection of stories gotten together for class use. With the exception of a few paragraphs, it is original material written out of the experiences of the author himself in Cuba where he spent several months. The different chapters give a keen insight into the climate, customs, manners, educational system, holidays, etc. of the natives of Cuba. It is highly fitting also that we should know about these things when we are so closely allied with the Island. Furthermore, as Prof. Ewart states in his preface, the Modern Language Association of America recommends that "the textbooks of Spanish embrace works dealing with the geography, history and customs of Spanish America as well as of Spain." The book is attractive in appearance, has good paper and print, and is illustrated with photographs, most of which were taken by the author himself.

From personal use with three large classes, the writer of this review concluded that "Cuba y las Costumbres Cubanas" is intrinsically interesting to students. In the back of the book are "Preguntas" and composition exercises which require the use of common idioms that the student is compelled to look up in the text itself. The vocabulary is complete and the notes good. Personally, I should prefer that some of the idiomatic expressions given in the notes should be in the vocabulary, for I always find a tendency on the part of some students to forget to use the notes. It would have been well to indicate the radical changing verbs in the vocabulary either by putting after the verb the changes occurring in the present tenses or by putting the number of the class.

The book will appeal to teachers and students because it is short. Too many of our Spanish readers are excessively long. As a whole, I place this book in the class with three or four other Spanish readers which I consider the best on the market.

ROBERT CALVIN WARD

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Notes and News

THE FOREIGN LANGUAGE SITUATION IN NEW JERSEY HIGH SCHOOLS

In reports on the status of the foreign languages in the high schools of Wisconsin published in *The Modern Language Journal* for December 1920 and October 1921 by Professors Alexander R. Hohlfeld and Bayard Q. Morgan, the former pointed out the fact that the result of the war had been not simply the substitution of French and, to a less degree, of Latin and Spanish for German in the high schools of the state, but the discontinuance of German instruction in all but twenty-one public high schools, and had led to an absolute drop of 1876 or 8.8% in the total enrollment in foreign languages, ancient and modern, comparing the figures of 1920-1921 with those of the year 1916-1917. In the last named year a total of 17,082 or 35.4% of the total registration (48,000) were enrolled in the foreign language classes; in 1920-1921 only 15,206 or 26.6% of the total registration (57,000) were enrolled in these same languages. Where there were only 47 high schools in the state teaching no language besides English in 1916-1917, there were 142 such schools in the year 1920-1921.

In an article by Dr. S. Dwight Arms on *The Outlook for Latin in New York State*, published in *The Educational Review* for January 1921, a similar effect was noted in the high schools of New York State. There was a falling off in the total number enrolled in the foreign language classes in 1918-1919 amounting to 16,862, or 8% of the total high school registration, as compared with the average for the five year period 1913-1918. But as Dr. Arms did not take into account the increase in general high school attendance during the period under consideration, the total loss to the foreign language enrollment is probably nearer 25,000 or about 12% of the total registration in these schools.

This same tendency toward a decreased enrollment in all foreign languages, ancient as well as modern, is further confirmed by statistics for the State of New Jersey recently compiled by The Department of Public Instruction. The following table gives the total high school enrollment in each foreign language for the years 1916-1917 and 1920-1921. The percentage under each language indicates its percentage of the total registration in the high schools:

	Latin	French	German	Spanish	Greek	Italian	Total
1916-1917	16761	5599	16939	2916	90	0	42,304
	33%	11.2%	33.3%	5.9%	.19%	.00	83.59%
1920-1921	14651	16960	164	10551	20	49	42,295
	23.15%	26.99%	.262%	16.89%	.032%	.784%	67.4%

It will be noticed that, while French and Spanish during the years under consideration have gained 11,361 and 7,635 pupils or almost 16 and 11 per cent respectively of the total high-school registration, these gains have not offset an actual loss of 2110 pupils, or 10 per cent in the Latin enrollment, and the almost total elimination of German. While the total number enrolled in all foreign language classes in 1916-1917 and in 1920-1921 shows an actual difference of only 9, the foreign languages taken together have lost over 16 per cent of their enrollment when the increase in general high school attendance is taken into account.

The effect of the war has been, at least in three states—and probably elsewhere, if reliable statistics could be obtained—to decrease the enrollment in foreign language study considered as a whole. And that, too, at a crisis in the nation's history when the need of a thorough knowledge of foreign languages and of foreign institutions among our people was never so great as it is today. "If this be true," as Dr. Arms remarks in the concluding paragraph of his article," it suggests that all friends of linguistic studies should stand together to defend each other's field of instruction. They should stand together in any event, for their interests, personal and educational, are akin. The propagandist, who in his advocacy of Spanish rails at Latin, is only menacing the structure that his hand would rear. For it must be understood that no loss or injury can come to one group of such studies that will not be reflected in the weakening of the whole humanistic educational fabric."

J. PRESTON HOSKINS

Princeton

December 17, 1921

In the May 1921 number of the JOURNAL (pp. 456-7) there were published some figures as to the number of high schools in the different states offering courses in French and Spanish. We are informed by Heath & Co. that the figures for the state of Texas should be corrected to show 260 high schools offering Spanish and 59 offering French. This information has been secured by the kindness of Miss Laura Topham of the East Texas State Normal School, Commerce, Texas.

Students of French Literature will be interested to know that a new edition has appeared of Lanson: *Manuel bibliographique de la littérature française moderne* (Nouvelle édition, revue et augmentée, Paris, Hachette, 1921). The first three parts are a reprint of the 1914 issue. Part 4 (Nineteenth Century) contains an additional section on war literature. The Supplement and Index make up Part 5. The Supplement has been revised and enlarged, containing now 202 pages. The price of the new edition is 80 francs in a single volume, but owners of the former edition may bring theirs up to date by purchasing Parts 4 (30 francs) and 5 (15 francs).

NEWS FROM NORTH CAROLINA

The Modern Language Association of North Carolina met in Raleigh at the time of the Teacher's Assembly on Friday and Saturday after Thanksgiving. In spite of untoward conditions, rather more were in attendance than at Asheville last year. Considerable enthusiasm was apparent and the discussions frequently became general. As the Teachers' Assembly does not think proper to admit more departments, the meeting voted to have a separate session in the spring at The North Carolina College for Women. It is expected that an expert from outside the state will be secured to deliver an address before the Association at that time. Dr. Dey of the University will also probably give his postponed address on the use of phonetics in the teaching of French pronunciation.

Another important decision of the past meeting was that the membership fee shall hereafter be two dollars, of which one dollar and seventy-five cents shall comprise a subscription to the MODERN LANGUAGE JOURNAL, the aim being to form an affiliated group of the National Federation.

Among the entertaining features of the meeting were a short allocution in French by Professor Irvin S. Goodman on the culture and beneficent influence of France, and talks in French and Spanish by other members.

One of the most hopeful things about the gathering was the fact that all the important colleges with a stable language staff were represented and had a very helpful attitude.

The teaching of modern languages in the state has many factors. In the first place, French is undoubtedly the rival of Latin for first place among foreign languages. However, in the present condition of rapid change, there is reason to fear that in taking the place of Latin, if that is to be the case, the state minimum of two years modern language requirement for high schools might very readily become the general maximum of courses offered in modern languages. The whole outlook for modern language teaching is encouraging as regards the tastes of the students in choosing electives, and the rapidly increasing number of students enrolled in courses. No exact totals can be obtained, but many single reports point to a very appreciable increase in the number of modern language students over last year. One college has an increase of twenty-five per cent, and on the question of increase being put at the Association, a majority indicated increases and no decreases were reported.

As regards the proportionate teaching of the individual languages, German still seems to have practically no place in the high school curriculum. In the colleges it shows a certain increase, and in one or two instances a large increase for local and more or less

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mechanical reasons. Last year we mentioned the ratio of French to Spanish as roughly 6 to 1. This year it appears to be about 4 to 1.

French and Spanish clubs are distinctly in the air in the colleges and are springing up everywhere. In the high schools they are few owing to circumstances outlined above, of which the two-year course is the most important.

Mlle Germaine Villedieu of Dijon, France is assisting in French and pursuing some studies at the N. C. College for Women, Greensboro, N. C.

W. S. BARNEY

Chicago is named as one of the 13 schools in the United States whose students and faculty are eligible for Belgian Fellowships, according to a communication received by the authorities here from the C. R. B. Educational Foundation in New York.

The Fellowships will be awarded by May 1, upon nominations by the heads of the schools upon which the honor falls. Only American citizens with a speaking and reading knowledge of French will be considered.

Those eligible have been divided into three classes: members of the faculty of the institution below the grade of associate professor; research students with degrees in their fields, and graduate students who wish to study further in some field and expect to take up teaching or research as a profession.

The Fellowships are for one year and are open equally to men and women. They bear full traveling expenses to and from Belgium plus 12,000 francs. Those awarded the Fellowships have the choice of schools which they wish to attend.—From the *Daily Maroon*, University of Chicago, April 27, 1921.

TEXAS NEWS

The meeting of the Modern Language Section of the State Teachers' Association was held at Dallas, November 25. Some fifty teachers were present. The presiding officers were Mr. C. M. Montgomery, University of Texas, Chairman, and Miss Rebecca Switzer, Oak Cliff High School, Secretary. The program of the general session included the following papers: 1. Why Study a Foreign Language?—Dr. C. F. Zeek, Southern Methodist University. 2. The Modern Language Situation in Texas—Miss Lillian M. Casís, University of Texas. 3. A Texas Section of the National Federation of Modern Language Teachers—Miss Laura Topham, East Texas State Normal. The annual business meeting followed. The election of officers resulted in Dr. C. E. Zeek's being elected chairman and secretary.

A motion was carried to affiliate the section with the National Federation, and a committee was appointed to work out the details.

The feeling was general that, owing to the size of Texas, better results would be forthcoming if sectional groups could meet in four or five centers over the state. The plan, as presented, provided for the regular meeting in connection with the State Teachers' Association and a second group meeting to be held at some time during the spring at each of the chosen centers.

The program of the sectional meetings for Spanish, French, and German, which immediately followed the general session, included for the Spanish Section: 1. The content and value of second and third year composition in Spanish—Miss Ruby C. Smith, North Texas State Normal. 2. Cross references to other languages in teaching Spanish—Mr. S. A. Myatt, Southern Methodist University. 3. Hispanic-American vs Spanish. 4. Material for high school reading—Miss Rebecca Switzer, Oak Cliff High School, Dallas. 5. Discussion: The proper attitude toward Spanish pronunciation in the Southwest—Mr. C. M. Montgomery, University of Texas. At the meeting of the French-German Section, Dr. F. C. A. Schmberg of Southwestern University presented a paper on *The Teaching of German in Our High Schools, not How, but Why*. Miss Mélanie von Gastel, Dallas, read a paper on *The Public Schools of France*. The program was concluded by a general discussion as to ways and means of stimulating interest in professional meetings of Modern Language teachers. It is to be hoped that when the meetings are brought within the reach of larger numbers really effective work will result.

THIRTEENTH ANNUAL MEETING OF THE N. Y. STATE MODERN
LANGUAGE ASSOCIATION

Buffalo, November 22-23, 1921

Tuesday Morning, November 22

Reports of Secretary and Treasurer. Appointment of Committees. Brief Reports from Chairmen of Sections.

Exhibit of Class-room Work and Helps, Miss Maude Babcock, Girls' High School, Brooklyn.

Supervised Study in Modern Languages, Mr. Walter D. Head, Nichols, Buffalo.

Discussion.

The Responsibility of the Teacher of Modern Languages in the Secondary Schools, Dr. R. H. Jordan, Professor of Education, Cornell University.

Discussion.

Question-Box, Professor James F. Mason, Cornell University.

Tuesday Afternoon

Address in Spanish: "Don Quijote de la Mancha," Professor Manuel Rivera, Canisius College and Nichols School; President of the Centro Hispano-Americano of Buffalo.

Address in Italian: "Dante Alighieri e la Lingua Italiana," Mr. Ferdinand F. Di Bartolo, Hutchinson-Central High School.

Address in English: "Dante," Francis Di Bartolo, Esq., Chairman of the Buffalo Dante Committee.

Italian Songs, Mr. Lorenzo Pace, Barytone, and Mr. John Nisita, Tenor, of Buffalo.

The Use of Practical Phonetics in the Teaching of French Pronunciation, Professor Clarence E. Parmenter, University of Chicago.

Discussion.

Wednesday Morning, November 23

The Use of Educational Tests in Modern Language Teaching, Mr. J. Cayce Morrison, Specialist in Educational Measurements, State Education Department.

Reports of Teachers who have used Tests.

Questions and Discussion.

Marks and Their Meaning, Dr. Charles H. Holzwarth, West High School, Rochester.

Discussion.

Question-Box—Continued.

Reports of Committees on Resolutions and Nominations.

Election of Officers for 1921-22.

Unfinished and New Business.

The Thirteenth Annual Meeting of the Association was called to order at 9:30 A.M. on November 22 by President Arthur G. Host in Townsend Hall, University of Buffalo. The following committees were appointed: Nominations: Dr. Wm. R. Price, Miss Alice F. Corell, Miss N. B. Rogers, Professor Edmund Tilly; Resolutions: Miss Blanche Daniels, Miss Lydie L. Chamot, Professor H. H. Lohans, Jesse F. Stinard, A. L. Harris. Written reports of the sectional meetings held during the year showed a good attendance and a live professional interest in their work on the part of the modern language teachers of the state. Sectional chairmen who were present gave verbal reports of the meetings of their sections.

Miss Maude Babcock of the Girls' High School, Brooklyn, gave a very pleasing and suggestive talk to teachers on Classroom Work and Helps. She spoke of the advisability of cooperation between modern language teachers and others and stressed the necessity of studying child psychology. She gave many practical hints as to method and the use of Realia in enlivening the recitation.

Professor Walter D. Head of the Nichols School, Buffalo, spoke most interestingly on Supervised Study in Modern Languages. He said in part:

"Supervised study is merely another name for the scientific treatment of the study and learning process. Although ideal conditions, such as are outlined in Professor Hall-Quest's book, are not as common as they should be, any teacher can do something to improve conditions of study in her subject, if she will give the matter serious attention. A recitation should be divided into two parts:

First: The creative or motivating part.

Second: The testing or study part.

The objects of supervised study are;

First: To increase the power of intensive concentration.

Second: To provide the teacher with an opportunity to test the ability of the class to carry out the assignments or projects which have been presented to them.

Third: To help a teacher get a clear idea of pupils' individual capacities and to give such individual help as is needed.

Supervised study is a valuable check on the teaching, and should be a great assistance to the teacher, by showing her what parts of the subject have not been fully comprehended and what ones need further attention.

"A few practical suggestions for bringing about better study conditions in modern languages are as follows:

1. Have your class make a list of studying helps. Under this, a clear knowledge of the use of text-books is an object well worth seeking for.
2. Train your class in mechanical details of study such as going to work promptly, being all ready for work before you start and avoiding all kinds of interruptions.
3. Much training is possible in special subjects connected with the learning of modern languages, as for example;
 - a. Teaching pupils not to use the vocabulary in translation until every other method of finding out the meaning of a new word has been tried.
 - b. Various methods of learning vocabularies, etc. can be presented to them.

"Time spent by the teacher in individual conference with pupils on the subject of methods of study will do much to bring some of the difficult cases up to the mark. The power of attack on a lesson, is really the test of the ability of the class to handle the subject. In the supervised study period, the teacher has a chance to get a definite idea of what this power of attack is, both on the part of the class and on the part of individuals in it. Two most interesting and helpful books on "Supervised Study" are the ones by Miss McGregor and Miss Simpson of Rochester. Both of them advo-

cate a tri-part assignment, based on the abilities of different groups in the class. This is a subject, which although difficult of administration, deserves the thoughtful attention of every teacher."

The Responsibility of the Teacher of Modern Languages in the Secondary Schools was the subject treated by Dr. R. H. Jordan, Professor of Education, Cornell University.

"The teacher of modern languages has a three fold responsibility: first, for the attainment of those aims of education which are not definitely pertinent to the subject of modern language alone but which must be kept in the background of all successful teaching; secondly, for the attainment of aims which will correspond most nearly to the definite purposes which society consciously expects of pupils who have studied modern languages for a period of years; thirdly, the attainment of objectives which do not so consciously function in popular estimation, but which must motivate modern language instruction if it is to justify itself entirely in the scheme of instruction.

"These responsibilities entail specific duties upon the teacher: first, the duty of thorough preparation, involving at least eight years of modern language study and residence abroad; secondly, a continued study of the objectives of teaching, both with relation to the particular group of pupils appearing in the classroom, and the possibilities of the subject; thirdly, a scientific study of these objectives to determine which are fundamental in fact and which are purely theoretical; fourth, a careful selection of subject matter which will, on the negative side, not prejudice the pupil against his own country in favor of the foreign nation, and positively, which will add to his appreciation of literature and his joy in reading masterpieces either in the vernacular or in a foreign tongue; fifth, the use of such methods as will not close the door of the pupil to any of the possibilities to be derived from the foreign tongue. This will mean a constant study and possible modification of method as objectives are more clearly and specifically defined. In the end the assumption of these responsibilities by modern language teachers will insure the place of modern language in the curriculum and will render the student who has had the advantage of such instruction a more efficient citizen of the American Commonwealth, socially, industrially, and politically."

After a short Question Box discussion led by Professor James F. Mason, Cornell University, the meeting was adjourned. The attendance at the session was 125.

The Tuesday afternoon session was devoted to the following interesting addresses: Address in Spanish: Don Quijote de la Mancha by Prof. Manuel Rivera, Canisius College and Nichols School, President of the Centro Hispano-Americano of Buffalo,

who spoke in part as follows: "Hay cuatro obras magistrales que hayan de ser incluídas entre la media docena, más ó menos, de las obras sumamente sobresalientes de los siglos. Las obras a las cuales me refiero son, *La comedia Divina*, *Hamlet*, *Faust*, y *Don Quijote*.

Como poetas, sobresalen, sin duda Dante y Goethe, pero al inmortal Cervantes no habrá quien le niegue la paternidad de la forma definitiva de lo que se ha prestado más a la expression literaria de nuestros días, es decir, la novela.

Gloria a Miguel de Cervantes y Saavedra, el héroe quien, dedicando su juventud al servicio militar de su patria, supo perder el brazo izquierdo peleando por la fe cristiana en Lepanto, la gran batalla marítima que derrotó por siempre el poder marítimo de los Turcos, y quien supo escribir despues con la mano que le quedó la obra, no solamente la más grande de la literatura española, sino también una de las supremas del mundo.

A los pocos meses después de la publicación de *Don Quijote*, fué traducido y leído en toda Europa. Diez años después, todavía era tan popular que no pudo Cervantes resistir las demandas de que escribiese una continuacion de la historia. 'Vengan más qui jotadas; embista don Quijote y hable Sancho Panza, y sea lo que fuera, que con eso nos contentamos,' decía todo el mundo en aquél entonces. Y así lo hizo Cervantes, escribiendo la segunda parte y acabando con la muerte de don Quijote.

De las aventuras asombrosas y divertidas que les sucedieron, a él y a Sancho Panza, ni de los diálogos tan sabrosas, entre el Caballero de la triste figura y su tan hablante escudero, no me queda lugar aquí a referirme. ¡Que las lean, los que todavía no hayan experimentado este gusto raro!

Es un libro lleno de acción y de situaciones dramáticas y cómicas. Es un cuadro de la vida pintoresca y de las maneras y costumbres de España en aquellos tiempos, y un modelo para siempre de esta forma literaria, es decir, de la novela. Por entretenido que sea, y a pesar de que niega Cervantes que tenga ninguna intención seria, no deja de ser un libro de profunda filosofía.

El señor Byron, poeta inglés, ha acusado a Cervantes de haber maltratado las costillas de su héroe, apagando con la ironía el fuego heroico del alma española. Pero Byron no tiene razon. El fuego heroico está tan poco apagado, que muchos siguen viendo en don Quijote una fuerza exaltadora capaz de iluminar con su ejemplo las almas sombrías de los hombres. Y si nos reímos de don Quijote, también sus desilusiones y sus golpes nos hieren de rechazo. Nuestra sonrisa va siempre acompañada con simpatía conmovida.

Los rebuscadores del simbolo, en todas sus multiples variedades, se fundan principalmente en el contraste entre don Quijote

y Sancho Panza; el cielo y la tierra; la fantasía y la realidad; la ilusión y el sentido común; el sueño y el despertar; el ideal generoso y la brutalidad plebéya; bajo cualquier aspecto que se haya querido examinar este simbolismo permanecen firmes, como los polos contrarios, las figuras opuestas del caballero y de su escudero.

Debemos mucho a los don Quijotes del mundo y, gracias a Dios, con las necesidades del mundo siempre vienen los héroes. Porque hay muchos de capacidad quijotica. Soy de los quien creen que todos somos alternativamente ora Quijote, ora Sancho, y que la ocasión despierta el animo y la voluntad y se hacen héroes los hombres.

No ha muerto el quijotismo, ni en España, ni en Francia, ni en Inglaterra, (país del rey Arturo y los caballeros de La Tabla Redonda). Y quien dirá jamás que los Americanos esten siempre y por todo aficionados al perseguir del 'almighty dollar,' o que sea ésta una nación de Sancho Panzas, después del envío al traves del mar del magnifico ejercito de héroes; después de los esfuerzos y de los echos en la gran guerra mundial; después de haber mostrado el tan magnífico idealismo, la voluntad tan generosa, el glorioso quijotismo de ese Quijote entre las naciones, el 'Tío Sam,' en la defensa valorosa de las libertades del mundo.

He dicho."

A very pleasing feature of the afternoon was the singing of several Italian songs by Mr. Lorenzo Pace of Buffalo.

The last number on the program for the afternoon was a very helpful and illuminating discussion of the Use of Practical Phonetics in the Teaching of French Pronunciation by Professor Clarence E. Parmenter, University of Chicago. Professor Parmenter presented a combination of lecture and demonstration of the teaching of French pronunciation which was most suggestive and helpful not only to teachers of French but also to other modern language teachers.

Attendance at this session 160.

At the Wednesday morning session Mr. J. Cayce Morrison, Specialist in Educational measurements, State Education Department, spoke on the Use of Educational Tests in Modern Language Teaching. He said in part:

"Measurement holds two questions of interest to teachers of modern languages. First, is it possible to measure the capacity of children to learn the language? Second, to what extent can we measure achievement?

"Two types of studies are being conducted to find an answer to the first question. A number of schools are giving intelligence tests to children entering high school and are then comparing the intelligence test record with the pupils' achievement from time to time. Such investigations will ultimately determine what levels of

mental ability cannot expect to achieve success in our modern language classes as now organized. Attempts have been made to devise special tests for predetermining a child's capacity to succeed in foreign language study. Most notable of these attempts are the Wilkin's Prognosis Test, and the Handschin Predetermination Test. Carefully controlled experiments with the latter test indicate that it has some merit; but that it is not reliable as a basis for eliminating pupils from the study of foreign language.

"Achievement tests are useful to the modern language teacher in the following ways: they give an objective measure of the achievement of each class and pupil; they furnish a fair basis for comparison with other schools; the results may serve as an incentive to pupils; and the tests can be used to measure progress. The Henmon French Vocabulary and Sentence Tests are the best standardized of the modern language tests: there are four scales of equal value or difficulty, so that a class may be tested four different times without using the same material a second time.

"This is an age of experimental research. Modern language teachers will soon demand new and better scales than we now have; but before a great deal can be accomplished, it will be necessary, by careful research, to determine what should be the objectives of our work. As a first step, it would be well for us to discover what mental ability is required to master the courses in modern language now offered in our academic schools."

This was followed by a lively discussion led by Miss Rachel Marks, Technical High School, Buffalo.

Dr. Charles Holzwarth, West High School, Rochester, discussed as follows Marks and Their Meaning:

"Starting with a tabulation of marks in French classes over a period of five years, we are struck by the fact that the percentage of failure in the first term is fairly constant at about 33%, in the second and third terms at 23%, and in the fourth term at 12%. Satisfactory work (80-100%) is done by about 41% of the first term pupils, 40% in the 2d term, 41% in the third term, and 41% in the fourth term. The percentage of those doing unsatisfactory work, i.e. passing but barely so (75-80%), mounts from 26% in the first term, 37% in the second, 38% in the third, to 47 in the fourth term. What is the explanation and what the remedy?

"Various explanations suggest themselves: poor preparation of the pupil in the fundamentals of grammar, imperfect planning or division of the work on the part of the teacher or the department, lack of interest or laziness on the part of the pupil, lack of knowledge of how to study, poor grouping of the pupils, i.e. extremes in one section.

"Various remedies suggest themselves, most of which have been tried out in our classes: preparation of a syllabus of minimum

requirements for each term, a study period after school in charge of a French teacher, books selected with a view to interest, a honor roll for the pupils doing the best work, honor sections to progress more rapidly and do additional reading, dual assignment—minimum assignment for the lower half of the class, maximum for the upper half, assignment of a varying amount of credit for the course according to the final standing of the pupil.

"The last three suggestions were developed particularly. The pupils who are doing the best work at the end of the second term may be grouped into an honor section for the third term's work. Those who make good in this honor section and show a willingness to do extra work are then allowed to skip the fourth term and enter upon the third year French, receiving full credit for two years. This plan seems to be successful and has worked well thus far.

"The dual assignment involves considerably more work for the teacher. It is capable of good results only when skillfully handled by a teacher who is willing to undertake to give more time to the planning of the work than the average teacher can or will give. It involves handling the class at times as two separate groups. A preferable plan is to divide all pupils of a given class into sections according to ability in language work, a division which is rarely practicable because of the conflicts which ensue with other subjects.

"If 10 credits are normally given toward graduation (which requires 320 credits) for the completion of each term's work, why not give a point or two more to the A pupil (who receives 90-100%), just 10 to the B pupil (80-90%), and a point or two less to those who barely pass. If the mark of 90% given a pupil on a final report means anything, doesn't it mean that he has gotten 90% of a possible 100% knowledge of the subject matter of that term? Why not differentiate the amount of credit in some way according to the mark given? This might spur on the lazy and indifferent pupil who thinks there is no efficiency in getting more than a passing mark when there is no more credit to be gained. The University of Rochester, Union College and several other institutions have adopted a system of credits based upon marks. Why shouldn't the high school do the same?"

This was followed by a discussion, after which there was a continuation of the Question Box of the preceding day. Some of the topics discussed were: Predetermination Tests, Difficulty in Finding Spanish Texts suitable for School Use, Use of Phonetics in Spanish, How to Reduce the Amount of Work in order to do it more thoroughly.

At this time the following reports of committees were presented:

Resolutions Committee: Miss Daniels for the committee presented the following resolutions which were adopted:

1. *Resolved:* That this Association express to the teachers of Buffalo its appreciation of the hospitality and kindness again extended to the Association.

2. *Resolved:* That this Association extend to Dr. Price their sincere thanks and appreciation for his unfailing sympathy and help to the teachers of Modern Languages. He has made teaching under his leadership an inspiration, a real joy.

3. *Resolved:* That the teaching of phonetics is an undoubted help to all teachers and to *most* pupils.

4. WHEREAS, we have discovered through experience as teachers that much of the poor work done by students of Modern Languages is due to lack of knowledge of the fundamentals of English Grammar, and

WHEREAS, the many teachers of Classical Languages have expressed the same fact in reference to the Classical Languages, and

WHEREAS, instruction in English Grammar is not the province of the Modern Language teachers,

Be it resolved, That we, the members of the New York State Modern Language Association, meeting in convention at Buffalo, N. Y., November 23, 1921, do hereby recommend and urge that the persons responsible for planning courses of study in the High Schools and Junior High Schools of the state, make a course in the fundamentals of English Grammar a prerequisite to the study of Modern Languages in these schools.

5. WHEREAS, the Modern Language Association has twice put itself on record as favoring subject license for modern language teachers, be it

Resolved: That the Commissioner of Education again be urged to put this system into effect not later than 1925; and be it further

Resolved: That beginning at the same time (1925) the regents examinations in modern languages consist of a written and an oral examination.

6. *Resolved:* That a committee be appointed to urge upon the leading High Schools, Colleges and Universities of the State, the advisability of sending representatives to the annual meeting of the Modern Language Association with a view to securing more continuity in the educational programme.

Professor Siekman objected to the clause concerning compulsory oral examinations for pupils, whereupon it was agreed to omit this and leave it for future discussion. Motion was made and carried that the resolutions be adopted as a whole.

Nominations Committee: Dr. Price reported the following nominations and the candidates were duly elected: President, Dr. Charles Holzwarth, West High School, Rochester; First Vice-President, Professor James F. Mason, Cornell University; Second Vice-President, Professor Evie Grimes, Elmira College; Secretary

and Treasurer, Mr. Ferdinand D. Di Bartolo, Hutchinson-Central High School, Buffalo; Director, Professor Arthur G. Host, Troy High School; Representative on the Executive Committee of the National Federation of Modern Language Teachers, Professor F. C. Barnes, Union College.

New Business

Professor C. F. Siekman expressed an appreciation of the work of the retiring president to whom the members gave a rising vote of thanks.

Professor Host thanked Dr. Price, the board of directors and the efficient Secretary Treasurer for their cooperation in the work of the Association.

Professor John L. Luebben suggested that the board of directors try to get a rate concession from the railroad for the next annual meeting in Syracuse.

CHARLES HOLZWARTH

*West High School,
Rochester*

Correspondence

THE MEDIUM OF INSTRUCTION IN COLLEGE COURSES IN THE MODERN LANGUAGES, A COMMENT

Managing Editor, MODERN LANGUAGE JOURNAL:

In the Journal for November 1921 appeared a very sane article on the question of the use of the foreign language as the medium of instruction in college courses. The object of the following is not to take issue with the views expressed in the article, but to point out the fact that the writer of the article has not made any new discoveries nor offered any new suggestions. In the Journal for March 1918 an article on Nineteenth Century German Literature for Undergraduates by Frederick W. J. Heuser takes almost exactly the same ground. To go back still further in the past, and to take only one instance, for at least twenty-five years the modern language courses at Harvard have been given on the plan suggested by Mr. Hoskins. That is to say, they are in two groups, one devoted to the literary aspect of the work in which parallel courses offer the student the opportunity to do his work and follow his lectures in either English or the foreign language according to his taste and ability. The other group affords a smaller number of students, who may plan to teach, a chance to study the language from the point of view of conversation or grammar and composition. Furthermore, the scheme suggested as a possible future achievement is one that is already in active operation, though the catalogs may not show it by actual grouping and designation of courses, in more than one state university of the Middle West.

CHARLES E. YOUNG

State University of Iowa

WHAT IS ANNOTATION?

Managing Editor, MODERN LANGUAGE JOURNAL:

Since the unwritten law of the land has decreed that literary masterpieces shall be presented to college classes in predigested and guaranteed innocuous form, may we not at least demand that full nourishment be assured from what remains of the original? The question is surely rhetorical, but how is it answered in practice? Too often the first and controlling idea seems to be that annotation should be copious. To this end editors will conscientiously translate every Latin phrase that may have escaped the refining process; they would feel unworthy of their profession if a single "idiom" were left unregistered in the notes for the convenience of the student preparing for his examination. We have all heard students advising each other to "learn the notes and let

the text go hang!" Ability to translate "idioms" on examination is scarcely the fairest test of knowledge, at least with our present text-books, although many teachers confine translation almost entirely to that. At any rate the "notes" should be something more than a mere annex of the glossary. The space might be better used in some attempt at an *explication de textes*. No one will cast doubt on the lack of such annotation among text-books taken in the large, and I shall cite but one example to show one sort of interpretation—the easiest surely—which editors might make profitable use of.

Le Roman d'un Jeune Homme Pauvre has been "annotated" frequently enough in America to permit us to expect something approaching editorial perfection. I have not seen all the editions but the Librarian of Congress has not been able to find in any of the texts the explanation of a simple phrase. Now this phrase cannot fail to strike any careful reader as possessing connotation; the average student finds it "queer" until he knows why it is used. Incidentally he will miss a bit of characterization. Toward the end of the entry dated "25 juillet" the hero related how he was lunching at the house of Mlle Porhoët. She is an elderly maiden lady who traces her ancestry to the mythical kings of Brittany; the most illustrious families in France are proud of alliance with her house. "Mlle Porhoët, qui reste aujourd'hui seule de son nom, n'a jamais voulu se marier, afin de conserver le plus longtemps possible dans le firmament de la noblesse française la constellation de ces syllabes magiques: Porhoët-Gaël.—Les Bourbons," she would say, "les Bourbons sont de bonne noblesse; mais (prenant soudain un air modeste) il y a mieux!" Naturally she was the cause of much amusement among her bourgeois friends, but the heroine of the story, Marguerite Laroque, loved and admired her. Mlle Porhoët has learned that Maxime is distantly related to her family and thereafter calls him "mon cousin" in the grand manner of Louis XIV. The two are lunching together one day at Mlle Porhoët's home when an unexpected visit interrupts them "*Ouvrez, dit gaie-ment en dehors une voix d'un timbre grave et musical; ouvrez, c'est la fortune de la France!*" No student would ever think of greeting a friend in such a manner and consequently is apt to consider Marguerite a freak. But explain to him that she is using playfully a famous "mot historique" to flatter her old friend's whimsies and the "queerness" disappears. May I venture to recall to commentators, contemptuous of legendary lore, that Philippe VI, after his defeat at the battle of Crécy, sought refuge in the château de La Broye, exclaiming: "*Ouvres, ouvres, chaste-llains, c'est la fortune de la France!*"¹

¹ It matters little that another version, more "historical" perhaps, but certainly less picturesque, makes the king say: "*C'est li infortunés rois de France!*" Posterity has adopted the mot as Marguerite quotes it.

All literature is of course packed with just such allusions, perfectly familiar to cultivated readers of the author's countrymen, but needing commentary among youthful students beyond the frontiers. I submit that this and similar *explications de textes* can be more profitably used to make annotation copious than the transfer of a portion of the glossary to the notes.

BENJ. M. WOODBRIDGE

University of Texas

LANGUAGE SEEN HISTORICALLY

Managing Editor, MODERN LANGUAGE JOURNAL:

Permit me to express my pleasure on noting in your October number the letter of Professor Hacker on the logical subject introduced by *de* in French. For the benefit of any teachers who do not have access to large university libraries, special mention should be made of two studies dealing rather conclusively with this subject, both by Hilding Kjellman:

1. La construction de l'infinitif dépendant d'une locution impersonnelle en français. Des origines au XVe siècle. Uppsala 1913.

2. La construction moderne de l'infinitif dit sujet logique en français. Etude de syntaxe historique. Uppsala 1919.

Any signs of renewed vitality in the study of Romance syntax must be hailed with joy by all sincere lovers of these languages after its seemingly moribund condition of the last few years. No justification of the study of syntax should be needed; the statement of the problem should carry its own convincing evidence with it. The teacher who is not gifted with the probing mind reaches but a slight depth of understanding of his subject, whether that subject is a modern language or one of the sciences. His knowledge tends to become dogmatic and his teaching autocratic if he does not consciously increase their depth and breadth by original investigation not called for in the college schedules. No one can expect the young student, who is being gently led into the labyrinth of scholarship, to arrive at any original explanations of difficult language phenomena; but the student has little chance of later evincing originality or clear thinking in any marked degree unless, under the encouragement of competent mentorship, he is early led to develop them to the extent of his capacity. Surely if the teacher feels neither interest nor responsibility in the matter of knowing the *causes* for the locutions he uses every day, but is on the other hand content with a mechanical and parakeet-like repetition of rules and sounds, the student is being cheated out of one of his most important linguistic birthrights.

It is without doubt one of the few dangerous corollaries of the direct method that the student attains a certain facility in the *rendition* (in its etymological sense of *giving back* to the instructor)

of current phrases without in the least understanding their present form. Furthermore, the student usually believes, and is given to believe, that words have some inalienable and divine right to be employed in certain groups and in certain orders. It never occurs to him, nor is it usually pointed out to him, that perhaps the most basic language postulate is that every construction has a past, a present and a future. The law of the survival of the fittest, as well as that of evolution, is quite as applicable to language and its component parts as it is to humanity and the individual man. Without this language postulate the invaluable contributions of such Romance scholars as Diez, Meyer-Lübke, Menéndez Pidal and many others would be lost to us.

One of the most frequent means of exonerating and even of hallowing a profundity of ignorance on the part of the teacher is that of calling a construction an idiom. This is generally taken in the secondary or tertiary sense of *idiotisme* (*idiotismo*) as something lacking in reason, not in its historical sense of something individual, specific. Thus the student is told to memorize so many idioms, with never a word of explanation to suggest that, while these language developments are the hardest and most individual of constructions, they can often be satisfactorily explained in the matter of growth and change. The hundredth sheep is more interesting than the ninety and nine, linguistically as well as Biblically. Granted that the origin and development of many so-called idioms are still shrouded in conjecture, nothing is argued thereby except that there remains plenty of interesting work for us to do. Would it not be a source of lasting regret to us if our students, among whom there are undoubtedly some excellent mental capacities, should be permitted to be content—in fact should be forced to be content—with any mechanico-apologetic method of language study? Let us teach our students the direct method by all means, any *direct* method, since their interest is largely in the spoken language; but let us give them a modicum of the philosophy of language as well. Let us not stultify our individual initiative nor that of our students with any talking-machine method. The phonograph record may be the conveyor of much beauty of thought, but no one can accuse it of doing any original thinking.

These few paragraphs are not intended as a denial of the value of the direct method, nor is it desired to eliminate or even diminish class-room frills. A very earnest plea is made, however, for the intelligent application of both direct method and drills to the end of encouraging the pupil not merely to think *in* the language, but also *about* the language and *for* the language (and the greatest of these is *thinking* at all).

W. A. BEARDSLEY

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